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For what it's worth, here's some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

TOP 10

MARIAM BASTANI

- NERVESKADE-LP / WEIRD TV-tape
- CÜLO-Military Trend-EP
- INSERVIBLES-Cual es tu Pedo, Ñero?-EP
- ZOMBIE DOGS-LP
- NO STATIK-45 and live
- DEATH-Spiritual Mental Physical-CD
- WELDERS-Pervert-EP
- GASMASK TERRÖR-LP / KONTATTO-LP
- HERÄTYS-EP / MARTYRDÖD-Sekt-LP
- KRUEL / UNLEARN / OPT OUT-live

BRACE BELDEN

- CRUSHED BUTLER-It's My Life/My Sons Alive-45
- RED MASS-LP
- TESTORS-It's Only Death/Drac-45
- CHINESE BURNS-Rophynol-45
- WELDERS-Pervert-EP
- CÜLO-Military Trend-EP
- VOGUE-Pompshit-LP
- REIGNING SOUND-live
- RANTOULS-In the Village of Rantoul-LP
- NARCS-I Want Dope, I Want Pussy, I Want all that...-EP

TIM BROOKS

- RED RED RED-New Action-LP
- NO STATIK-45 / NERVESKADE-LP
- INSERVIBLES-EP / MARTYRDÖD-Sekt-LP
- CARGO CULT/TEXAS BISCUIT BOMBS-split 2x LP
- GERIATRIC UNIT-Audit of Enemies-LP
- V/A-Too Much Music, Too Many Bands-4x CD
- ARRIVALS-Volatile Molotov-LP
- 1981-Faster and Forward-EP
- OOGA BOOGAS-Sentimental Stranger/Eisbaer-45
- HYGIENE-Recruitment-EP

ROBERT COLLINS

- RUIDOSA INMUNDICIA-Huellas de Odio-EP
- MATA MATA-live
- FAST ASLEEP-live
- GASMASK TERRÖR-Black Sun/Fake Gold-LP
- BORED TO DEATH/CRIMINAL TRAP-split EP
- CARGO CULT/TEXAS BISCUIT BOMBS-split 2x LP
- MARTYRDÖD-Sekt-LP
- NERVESKADE-LP / HELLSHOCK-both LPs
- SWANN DANGER-EP / SEX PRISONER-EP
- UNLEARN-live and demo

SEAN "DOUGIE" DOUGAN

- ARRIVALS-Volatile Molotov-LP
- IDLE TIMES-LP
- JOHN WESLEY COLEMAN-Bad Lady Goes...-LP
- SPIDER BAGS-Take it Easy Tonight/Shaunda-45
- OOGA BOOGAS-Sentimental Stranger/Eisbaer-45
- RED RED RED-New Action-LP
- TRANZMITORS-It's Not Your Call/You Get...-45
- 1981-Faster and Forward-EP
- HYGIENE-Recruitment-EP
- NO SLOGAN-Daggers-EP

LAYLA GIBBON

- WEIRD TV-live and tape
- WELDERS-Pervert-EP
- INSERVIBLES-Cual es tu Pedo, Ñero?-EP
- HYGIENE-Recruitment-EP / 1981-Faster...-EP
- STANDARD TRIBESMEN-Waiting-EP
- DEATH-CD / TESTORS-It's Only Death/Drac-45
- CÜLO-Military Trend-EP / SIOUX-EP
- VOGUE-Pompshit-LP / NOMOS-Notes from Acheron-LP
- ZOMBIE DOGS-LP / NO STATIK-45
- PHEROMOANS-Midnight Watchdog-EP

DAN GOETZ

- V/A-T.O.Hardcore '83-LP
- HELLSHOCK-Ghosts of the Past-LP
- RUIDOSA INMUNDICIA-Huellas de Odio-EP
- VACCUUM-live
- NO STATIK-45 and live
- NO SLOGAN-Daggers-EP / FEJLFIX-EP
- ARCTIC FLOWERS-side of split-45
- RUNNING-LP
- ZOMBIE DOGS-LP
- CÜLO-Military Trend-EP

BOB GOLDIE

- V/A-T.O.Hardcore '83-LP
- SEX PRISONER-Judegment-EP
- NO SLOGAN-Daggers-EP
- CÜLO-Military Trend-EP
- MARVELOUS DARLINGS-I Hate Rock n Roll-45
- TENSE REACTION-Black Hole-EP
- TROUBLE-Nothing Left to Say-EP
- FRUSTRATION-Repetition-EP
- 1981-Faster and Forward-EP
- LÄRM-LP

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TOP 10

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KENNY KAOS

SHIRKS-Disease-EP	TOUCH-ME-NOTS-Keep Talking Like That/Hard...-45
SWEET SIXTEENS-Submarie/Loverboy-45	TROUBLE-Nothing Left to Say-EP
WELDERS-Pervert-EP	HUMANOIDS-Year of the Snake-EP
TRANZMITORS-It's Not Your Call/You Get...-45	RANTOULS-In the Village of Rantoul-LP
MARVELOUS DARLINGS-I Hate Rock n Roll-45	HOMEOWNERS-EP / MANNEQUIN MEN-45

CAROLYN KEDDY

HYGIENE-Recruitment-EP / HANK IV-LP and live	SHIRKS-Disease-EP / SUBTLE TURNHIPS-LP
OOGA BOOGAS-Sentimental Stranger/Eisbaer-45	WELDERS-Pervert-EP
TOUCH-ME-NOTS-45 and live	STIMULATORS-CD / LA PESTE-DVD
JOHN WESLEY COLEMAN-Bad Lady Goes...-LP	BUDGET ROCK 9-all bands live
STANDARD TRIBESMEN-Waiting-EP	CLEAN-live

RAY LUJAN

LOUIS LINGG AND THE BOMBS-Anarchist...-EP	WILD WILD GEESE-CD / SPIDERBAGS-45
KIDNAPPERS-Will Protect You-LP	READING RAINBOW-Tough Love/Over It-45
FULL OF FANCY-CD / FRESH AND ONLYS-45	RANTOULS-In the Village of Rantoul-LP
TRANZMITORS-It's Not Your Call/You Get...-45	DESTRUCTORS-101010-EP
SWANN DANGER-Staccato-EP	THUNDERDRIVER-Atomic Rock-EP

BRUCE ROEHRS

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RIP Bruce Roehrs 1950-2010

KEN SANDERSON

NERVESKADE-LP / LÄRM-LP	BHOPAL-Age of Darkness-LP
MARTYRDÖD-Sekt-LP / HELLSHOCK-LP	HERÄTYS-EP / CÜLO-Military Trend-EP
NO STATIK-45 / DEATHRAID-LP	CARGO CULT/TEXAS BISCUIT BOMBS-split 2x LP
GASMASK TERRÖR-LP / KONTATTO-LP	ARTIC FLOWERS/SPECTRES-split EP
MAMMOTH GRINDER-Extinction of Humanity-LP	BORED TO DEATH/CRIMINAL TRAP-split EP

FRED SCHRUNK

V/A-Puke and Destroy-LP	SIOUX-Doppelganger-EP
WELDERS-Pervert-EP	SWANN DANGER-Staccato-EP
V/A-The Ties that Bind-EP	HAIL SEIZURES-For the Ruin-CD
ZOMBIE DOGS-LP	SPECTRES/ARCTIC FLOWERS-split EP
HOMEOWNERS-Light and Vision-EP	TRANZMITORS-It's Not Your Call/You Get...45

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VILE NATION-Tight Leash-EP	INSERVIBLES-Cual es tu Pedo, Ñero?-EP

ZINE TOP TEN

Pillun Nuolija #1	*So Nails #5*
Even in Case I am Burning Please don't Piss on me	*Slingshot #104*
Shotgun Seamstress #5	*Communicating Vessels #22*
Freakout	*When Language Runs Dry #2, #3*
One Way Ticket to Curbsville #9	*Blue Floral Gusset*

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A WHOLE CRAPLOAD OF MRR BACK ISSUES

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, DDI, Bonecrusher, Normals, All Bets Off, Stiletto Boys, Summerjack, Cell Block 5.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, 3rd Party, No Class.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres.

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waffle, Flat Earth Recs.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion.

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob.

#221/Oct '01. The G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, Artcore, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola & San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, Snakepit zine, Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, Trust zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/Mar '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl,Vrah.

#253/June '04. Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, scene reports from Portland, Boston and Germany.

#255/Aug '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/Sep '04. Observers, #Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04 The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, Boss Martians, Reactionary 3, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, AI, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

#262/March '05. Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scenes.

#263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antiseet, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

#264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

#265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

#266/July '05. The Carbonas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report, photos.

#267/August '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech and New Zealand scene reports.

#268/September'05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida Scene Report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

#269/October '05. Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stalag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

#270/November '05. Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oi!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

#271/December '05. Besthöven, Abductee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged / Criminal IQ / Kick'n'Punch Records. Scene reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

#272/January '06. Conga Fury, Let's Grow, Frustration, Bastardass, Icons of Filth, Burial, Hrydjuverk, Cranked Up!, Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis, Tropezio, Baboon of Sickness zine. Scene reports: Austin, France, Michigan, Larry Wolfley photos.

#273/February '06. Fuses, Endstand, Out Cold, Pedestrians, Acts of Sedition, BadEatingHabits, Western Addiction, Jesus Fucking Christ, Toxic Waste, Punk photo spread, St. Louis, USA & Brighton, UK scene reports.

#274/March '06. Best of 2005, Formaldehyde Junkies, Brutal Knights, Kansan Uutiset, Hatred Surge, A-Heads, Manikin, Upinatem, Hips, Boston scene report, Punk photo spread.

#275/April '06. History of ABC No Rio (Part One), Ringers, Missbrukarna, '90s garage punk scumpit, Anatomi-71, After the Bombs, Rubella Ballet, RIP Pig Champion, Ricky Adam interview and photographs, Sean McGhee, Hard Skin US tour diary.

#276/May '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part One), History of ABC No Rio (Part Two), Vitamin X Asian Pacific tour diary, Soviet Valves Suburban Death Machine, Frustrations, George Hurchalla, Scene reports: Czech Republic and Greece.

#277/June '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part Two), Imperial Leather, Boom Boom Kid, Vitamin X Asian Pacific Tour (part two), "How to Make It Big!" by the Phantom Surfers, Magrudergrind, Poland.

#278/July '06. Billy Childish, Death Token, The First Step, Ramsey Kanaan of AK Press, Headache City, Deconditioned, Under Pressure, Insuiciety, Instigators, Malaysia Scene, Bay Area Scene Pics.

#279/August '06. Mika Miko, The Fall, Cardiac Arrest, Digger & the Pussycats, Massmord, Insect Warfare, The Astronauts, Canary Islands Photo Spread, Four Slicks, The Fallout, PAWNS, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, & Umeå, Sweden scenes.

#280/September '06. Hjerte Stop, Grupo Sub-1, Desperate Bicycles, Bill Daniel interview and photo spread, APF Brigade, Disconvenience, Southkore Fest photo spread, Rosenbombs, Up the Voltage, Euro photo spread, Svartenbrandt, Asheville, NC & world wide punk scene reports.

#281/October '06. Out With a Bang, Redd Kross, Derek Lyn Plastic, We March, Alan Milman, Rat Traps, Blood Robots, The Scarred, Gilbert Switzer, Japan & US photo spreads, Sweden & UK scene reports.

#282/November '06. The Feelers, PESD, Toxic Ephex, Auktion, Bruise Violet, Trust fanzine, The Homosexuals, The Effigies, Rat City Riot, New York City & North Carolina scene reports.

#283/December '06. Jay Reatard interview & photos, Crimes Against Humanity Records, A Touch of Hysteria, Doris Fanzine, Kvoteringen, '90s Punk Scumpit Part II, Black Chrome, The Dirty Water Club, photos, Tokyo scene report.

#284/January '07. Margaret Thrasher, 924 Gilman at 20 Years, Order of the White Rose, Regress, Subhumans (UK) Part One, Blank Its, Condenada, Genetic Control, photos, Syracuse & San Diego scene reports.

#285/February '07. Randy "Biscuit" Turner of the Big Boys & the early Texas punk scene, Lemuria, Ruin, Subhumans (UK) Part Two, The Blinds, Tranzistors, ANS, Riot This, La Piovra, Bay Area scene pics, Barcelona, Spain scene report.

#286/March '07. Best of 2006, Smartut Kahol Lavan, Electric Kisses, Holy Shit!, Lost Cherrees Pt 1, Go!, Kraljevo, Serbia, and Bakersfield, CA scene reports.

#287/April '07. Alicja Trout, Keith Rosson (Avow zine), Crap Corps, The Vicious, Scum System Kill, Lost Cherrees Pt 2, Restless Youth, SBV, Australia, Kyiv, Ukraine, and Pittsburgh, PA scene reports.

#288/May '07. Clockcleaner, Pisschrist, The Rats (Sweden), Conflict (US), The Viletones, Violent Tumor, Czech Republic and East Texas scene reports.

#289/June '07. Ultimo Resorte, Kursk, Masstrauma, Social Circkle, Final Approach, Post Punk Kitchen, Southern Death Cult, Portland Drummers, Timisoara, Copenhagen, and Pampanga scene reports.

#290/July '07. Stormcrow, Merkit, Solid Decline, Monster Squad, Sex Vid, Vivisick, Warkrime, Top Ten, We're Gonna Fight zine, White Cross, Berlin scene report.

#291/August '07. MRR 25th Anniversary Issue. Martin Sprouse, Tim Yohannon, No Slogan, Ruidosa Inmundicia, Chinese Telephones, Vaseline Children, Anti-System, Dave Roche, 6-page retrospective photo-spread, Kawakami/ Disclose obituary, Brazil scene report.

#292/September '07. New Bloods, Chronic Seizure, Outraged, Geriatric Unit, Active Distribution, Gruk, The Mods, No Defences, The Fakes, Trashies Tour Report, Mexico scene report.

#293/October '07. Punk and Immigration Theme issue w/ interviews, articles, and stories. Anti-You, Loser Life, Political Asylum, Olympia scene report.

#294/November '07. The Hipshakes, Neverending Party, Punk & Immigration article, Finally Punk, La Lucha Para La Justicia en Guatemala, Leftover Crack, AOA.

#295/December '07. Surrender, What If Gods Lie?, The Crawlers, 2:20, The Joneses, Libertario Magazine, Bad Samaritans, Shrapnel, Untermensch.

#296/January '08. Hellshock, Mario Panciera, Anathema, The System, Eddy Current Suppression Ring, The Voids, Cinecyde, Kykllooppien Sukupuutto, Punch In The Face, BSA.

#297/February '08. Marie Kanger-Born, Thrillhouse Records, Contaminators, Oi Polloi, Obstruction, I Walk the Line, Utopia.

#298/March '08. Best of 2007, Autistic Youth, White Lung, Karma Sutra, Clusterfuck, Sharon Cheslow, Slaughter of the Innocent.

#299/April '08. Government Warning, Age, Off With Their Heads, Guided Cradle, Go It Alone, Fy Fan, Daily Void, Hungarian Scene history.

#300/May '08. NorCal Punk Special: Fix My Head, Black Rainbow, Tank Crimes, Young Offenders, Church Police, Traditional Fools, Six Weeks/Short Fast & Loud, Ecoli.

#301/June '08. Underground Railroad to Candyland, Straightjacket Nation, Red Dons, Spectres, Dean Dirg, Kola, Los Violadores, the Sears, Tentacles of Destruction, Antibodies, Head on Collision.

#302/July '08. Giuda, Wasted Time, Reality, Sin Orden, Teenage Head, Antidote, La Urss, Canadian Rifle, Seasick, Israel & Japan scenes.

#303/August '08. Double Negative, Burnt Cross, Masapunk, Chicago Clitfest, Intifada, Nuclear Death Terror, Raw Power, Unlovables, Waste, Chaos In Tejas photospread, Houston and Grand Rapids scene reports.

#304/September '08. Raymond Pettibon, John Stabb of Government Issue, Cola Freaks, Measure [sa], The Press, XYX, Simply Saucer, Kulturkampf, Andy T, FPO, and Columbia scene report.

#305/October '08. Pierced Arrows, Bum Kon, Deep Sleep, Diente Perro, IRA, Legion of Parasites, Reality Control, Riot City Records, Stations, Test Patterns.

#306/November '08. Brain Handle, Assassins, Diodes (pt. 1), 97 Shiki, Black Dove, No Bunny, Shellshag, Sista Sekunden, Vivian Girls, Animals And Men.

#308/January '09. Punks & Film Special with Target Video, Whatever Happened To Susan Jane, Cleveland's Screaming, Mondo Vision, After the Salad Days, You Weren't There, Botinada, Taqwacores, and more.

#309/February '09. Ooga Boogas,Mind Eraser, Cococoma, Extortion, Boyracer, Nixe, Mr California, Deathcage, Squalora, Maniax, Null and Void, Think Fast.

#310/March '09. 2008 Year-end Top Tens. Health Issue Special–Interviews with Mikey Mind, Chris Colohan and Craig Lewis, plus tons of articles.

#311/April '09. Print Media special with Erick Lyle (Scam zine), Shit-Fi, Z-Gun, Terminal Boredom, Tales Of Blarg, John Holmstrom (Punk magazine), History of skate zines, Punk flyer art, and a dozen one-page fanzines.

#312/May '09. Criminal Damage, Never Healed, Masonics, Screaming Females, Germ Attak, Petticoats, Condominium, Passion Killers, Pioggia Nera, & the second part of the health issue.

#313/June '09. Cult Ritual, Acid Reflux, NN, Herds, Hunx and His Punx, Grass Widow, Project Hopeless, Defect Defect, Tom's Midnight Garden, Existers and scene reports from Sydney and Boston.

#314/July '09. Libyans, Coke Bust, Strange Boys, Turboslut, Vogue, Smart Cops, Zyanose, Dennis Dread, a History of Squatting in Italy, Tornonto Scene Report.

#315/August '09. Zero Boys, Skin Like Iron, Punch, The Black and Whites, Insomnio, Resist, Blank Dogs, Etacarinae, Come On, London and Brest scene reports.

#316/September '09. Amebix, Born/Dead, Divisions, Meatlocker, Something Fierce, Mutating Meltdown,Altercado, Anal Warnead, Nick Toczec, Cowley Club, Albany Scene Report.

#317/October '09. Queer issue. with Nastyfacts, Gary Floyd, Limp Wrist, Jos Seein' Red, GB Jones, Younger Lovers, Vaginal Davis, Josh Ploeg, Teu Pai Já Sabe?, Schwarzer Kanal, Bromance, Extra Tongue, and more.

#318/November '09. Destino Final, Ratas Del Vaticano, Hex Dispensers, John Joseph/Cro-Mags, Explode Into Colors, Ratos De Porao, Stupids, Antidotum/Czosnek Tour Diary, Disco Assault, Fuera De Linea.

#319/December '09. The Fix, Slices, Nodzzz, Brilliant Colors, Positive Noise, Gun Outfit, Pink Reason, Scrotum Poles, Gandhi's Cookbook, Goner Fest Photospread, Punk On Kuollut, Eläköön Hardcore: A Personal History of Finnish Hardcore.

#320/January '10. MRR Top Ten of the Decade, D-Clone, Broken Water, Complications, Control, Ian Glasper (The Day the Country Died/Burning Britain).

#321/February '10. Photo Issue. SOLD OUT!!! Sorry...

#322/March '10. MRR Review Staff's 2009 Top Tens, Japanese artist Sugi, Death, Dry-Roy, Druid Perfume, Kim Phuc, Defensa Absoluta.

#323/April '10. The Spits, Face the Rail, Battletorn, Scatha, Dadfag, Attentat Sonore, Partibrejkers, Mob Rules, Last Pogo, John Paull Williams from Really Red, Chuck Warner.

#324/May '10. Bruce Roehrs' memorial,, Kleenex/Liliput, Necro Hippies, Isterismo, RVIVR, Iceage, Tubers, Rot Shit, Beefeater, Cairo IL.

#325/June '10. X (Australia), Daylight Robbery, Ty Segall, Morne, Nü Sensae, Pollution, Th' Inbred, Bad Sports, Wankys, Rakosi, Lotus Fucker.

#326/July '10. U-ron from Really Red, Slang, Bunny Skulls, Trash Kit, Sedition, High Castle, Marcel Duchamp, Street Eaters, Circle Pit, Mehkago NT, Random Conflict, New Orleans and Calgary scene reports.

#327/August '10. Os Estudantes, The Curse, Pekinska Patka, Venereans, Thou, Italian Scene Report, Ratcharge Zine, and Culo.

#328/Mocktober '10. Deathrats, The Conversions, Agnostic Front, Puffy Areolas, Super Wild Horses, Rape Revenge, Bernays Propaganda, New York and Czech Republic Scene Reports.
Report, Ratcharge Zine, and Culo.

#329/Fall '10. Cock SParrer, UV Race, Veins, Kakka Hätä 77, Saint Vitus, Kontatto, De Hoje Hæle, Moonhearts, Irritones, Beyond Pink, French Scene Report.

#330/November '10. Forgetters, Acephalix, Foreign Objects, Hank IV, Pheromoans, La La Vasquez, Credentials, Bukkake Boys, Negative Lifestyle, Tyranna, Katriina Etholen, Ireland Scene Report.

#331/December '10. Kylmä Sota, Articles of Faith, Total Abuse, La Merma, Doña Maldad, Frankie Rose and the Outs, Little League, Versificator, Frankfurt Germany Scene Report, Belgium Scene Report.

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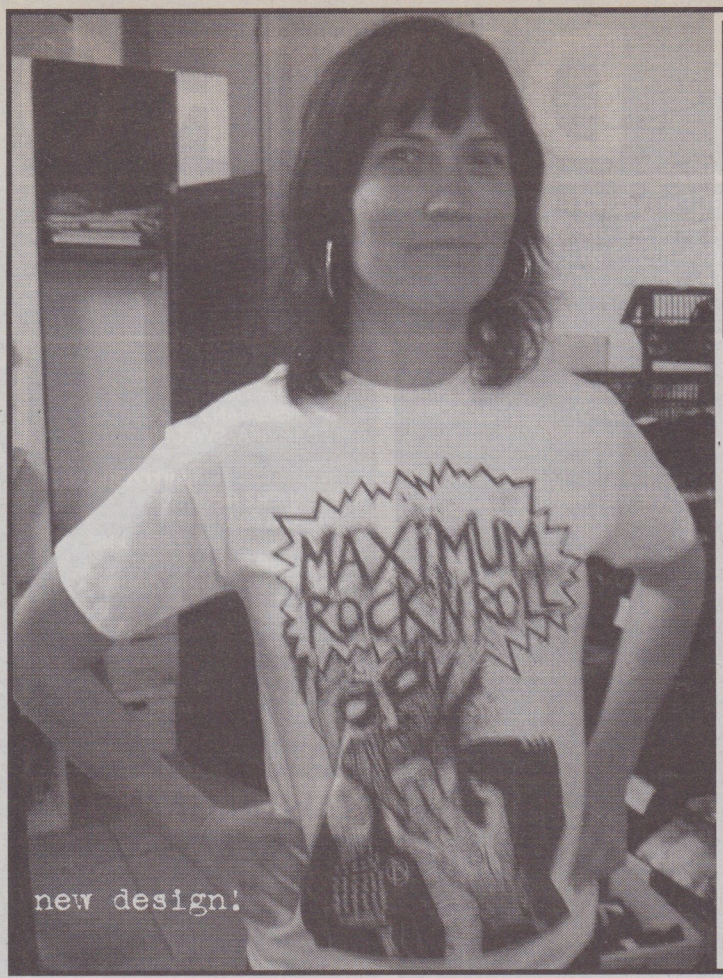

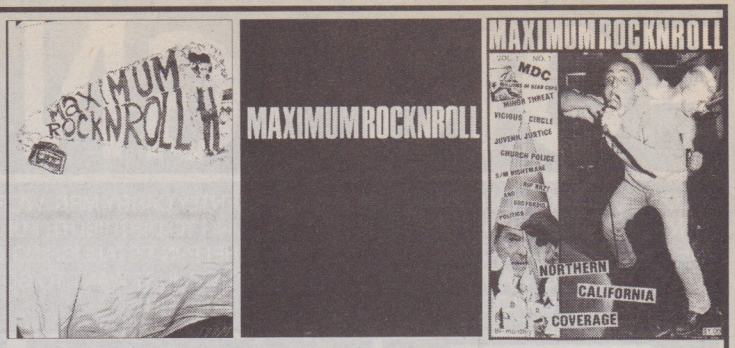

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LETTERS

Send letters to MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760, or to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. No response guaranteed.

Dear Maximumrocknroll—

I'm writing this letter to express total solidarity and support to letter writer "Jupiter" (Letters, #331) and all other furiously discontented kindred spirits. This was one of the most encouraging things I have read in *MRR* in quite some time—mostly for expressing in a confrontational way what many of us feel broadly towards so much of the trajectory of "punk" in this hollow, plastic era. For that reason, I totally suspect Jupiter's letter may have touched a nerve. Very likely the band will pen a defensive response, a counter-response by *MRR*'s coordinators will follow, and perhaps even some otherwise entitled individual may have even written in to take the opportunity to let us all know, "I'm tired of being called a 'hipster' too!"—all of which will very likely miss the absolutely vital larger issues raised by this letter.

The fact is that ultimately this isn't even really about Grass Widow. Nor is it about who is and isn't a "hipster," or what that word even means. In fact the larger point is one which we are all implicated in - the future of the punk as an *alternative*, what that can and should mean, and our collective place in all of this. This is about whether or not this scene or culture or whatever, is one that still values substance over style, still something meaningful apart from mainstream culture, and isn't just another vapid, stale "music genre." This isn't about Grass Widow, nor *any* one band—this is about all of us.

Because yes, there are still people out there who *give a fuck* and who continue to push the impulses and ethics that first brought them to punk in the first place: punk as a galvanizing, radical ethos, one that is totally confrontational, intellectually critical and viscerally challenging, politically radical and fiercely relevant to the kind of upside-down world that we find ourselves continually submerged in. And yes, there are still people who want to push that logic in new, creative, but yet still *uncompromising*, *radical* and *truly alternative* directions in the present and future tense; against the currents of stale boring rehash which is nothing but an empty cadaver of anything that used to mean something; to push against a totally de-politicized Nostalgia Industry that continues to completely buy up, co-opt and sell us back "our" culture in over-priced coffee table books.

The sad thing is that we are all a part of this Industry—we are both producers and consumers. But are these the identities we want to settle for, be reduced to and be content with? The fact that there are still individuals who not only see these contradictions, who yearn for something more, who also want to subvert - and exist independently of—a lame, sterol "indie music scene," but also want push those around them in the same way, is something we should absolutely embrace and, quite frankly, could use *far* more of.

I am often struck by how many of my peers, even those who have been similarly involved with DIY punk culture for well over a decade, seem to somehow never actually think about what it was about the *spirit* of punk that brought them to this music in the first place, and where that spirit finds itself now. Were and are people drawn to punk simply for the cool tunes, the appeal of hanging out with their friends, traveling, and "experiencing new cultures," all while being able to bask in the idea that they are part of some "alternative culture"? Maybe for some, but I think for many of us there is and was something more. Something profound about living in a totally alienating culture, being filled with discontent, and wanting a totally different fucking reality here and now. From my perspective, not enough of us think about this and thus we sometimes fail to put those conclusions more fundamentally into what we do —be it in bands, creatively, or as individuals in our lives.

For many of us (I hope) punk in terms of a sprit, an ethic, a perspective, is still very much a life thing - not some hobbyist weekend pursuit we cling to on one hand while we pursue stale careers as lifeless "young professionals" on the other. Something more than collecting records and other artifacts like pinned up insects from a time when we had and tried to live out "ideals." (I'm sorry, but I refuse to concede *giving a fuck about anything* as some "'90s phenomenon" for which so many seem to have such a bad taste in their mouths). But if punk means anything anymore, we need to think about this shit and take a long look in the mirror. And not just think about it, but push whatever answers or frustration or insecurity or rage we come up with into each and every facet of what we do creatively.

Each and every lyric we scream, every image we use and every decision we make *matters* and *is saying something*. Simply playing good, "original" and catchy music—no matter how "self-expressive" it may be - and getting recognized by lamely anointed, hip tastemakers for your "art"... that is not enough, nor should it ever be. And neither is it enough, nor even anything remotely meaningful, to assemble non-sequitur "found footage" to accompany your music (no matter how aesthetically pleasing it may be) when the content has no real relationship to anything - and that is *regardless* of how fucked up appropriating or using some images may or may not be. We need to think about what kinds of statements we are making in these completely fucked up times, in this fucked up era, and especially in this absolutely fucked up country.

And another point: Hasn't thirty years of trying shown that you simply cannot exist as a band that comes from any DIY/punk "underground" worth talking about and also be simultaneously trying to "make it?" You simply *cannot have it both ways*. And not because you cross some imaginary "PC" ethical line, but primarily because people will always rightly feel that you are using something genuine as a step to get somewhere else, that you cast aside the opportunity you have of developing something more meaningful down here, with those of us who don't want - and have never wanted—that kind of bullshit recognition and "acceptance." Striving for that kind of "success" and recognition from "hip" culture fundamentally changes *you* as much as the sincerity of what you create. No matter how much and how passionately people have argued otherwise (almost always out of their own personal insecurity), this is a plain and simple fact: going down that path unavoidably shifts your outlook, molds your considerations, and shifts even what you find yourself regularly talking and thinking about. Not even in a musical sense, but in a life sense. The way so many people among us have unquestioningly internalized that logic—approaching bands, projects or anything creative in their lives with the eyes of *small business owners* rather than as human beings—not only is it just fucking sad, but it stands in complete, total contradiction with what so many of us still value in all of this.

But this much is not even directed at Grass Widow—is true for any band and applies across the board. Grass Widow is certainly not the first band to have to navigate these issues and they certainly won't be the last. But haven't we learned from 30+ years of this debate that the central issue is not who is or isn't a "hipster"—or a "sellout" for that matter, the previous tarring word of choice—but rather to fight against on every front possible the very real, co-opting forces and tendencies which those words do (no matter how cliché) signify and make us all feel some degree of revulsion towards. And to fight them, wherever, whenever, and however we can: whether it's our amongst our friends, the bands and the culture we want to have around us, or even what we may see in the mirror – why are we so reluctant to push ourselves and each other to think more critically about what the fuck we're doing with our energy, our rage and our creativity?

And yes, certainly there are far more "offensive" bands than Grass Widow, both in and beyond the criticisms Jupiter makes. But maybe sometimes such is the best way to start talking about this shit—with the people or bands or friends around us who *have* come from a similar place, and who at some root level *might just actually give a fuck*.

Experience from these arguments has always shown me that you are never going to convince others who take the opposing side (those of the "who gives a fuck?"/"what's wrong with success?" side of the spectrum), and that's a given. The aim of this letter is not to convince. But there are many others out there with whom these sentiments still resonate, just as the sentiments behind Juptier's words did with me and undoubtable others.

And so, to Jupiter, there are other planets in your orbit. One day constellations will align and converge against those among us who merely see punk as "music for music's sake." Yes, we must always be pushing for something more. Indeed, "We are hollow otherwise."

Yours,

—Saturn

Dear Jupiter,

First of all we would like to express that our intention as a band is to create and foster scenarios where all people can gain access to our music, regardless of gender, race, class, or age. We are dedicated to being active in an ongoing dialogue on ways that all people can feel comfortable and included within our scene.

LETTERS

At our record release show we invited artists we trust to project films at our record release show. We accept full responsibility and hold ourselves accountable for any images associated with our band that made you feel offended or sick. Our intention was to provide an atmosphere of inclusiveness and participation.

The rumor you heard that we are building condos in China is not true. We played a show this past August and would be happy to discuss our trip to China, the nature of it, and any of our politics in an interview or conversation. We rarely turn down interviews as we see them as an opportunity to have a dialogue and speak on our own behalf. We encourage you or anyone to contact us at:
tracetheveins@gmail.com.
—Grass Widow
www.wizardmountain.org/grasswidow

Dear MRR—
I see a lot of my friends who only wear shirts of punk bands from the west and Japan. Foreign bands are everything to them. Some of them, when they see me they'll probably ask about what local bands are to be checked out. They only know bands from the faraway scenes and have never heard of bands from their own back yards. As if wearing local band shirts will bring such a big shame and "loser" seal on their forehead. Some spend hundreds ordering stuff online from record labels in the USA, but to pay for entering a local gig, they would prepare a thousand excuses. And to buy local releases, they would take first, pay later and eventually never pay at all…

Yes it's true that I feature mostly Malaysian bands and happenings in my zine, *Mosh*. Local bands have always had a special place in my heart. But it not only goes to bands, but also other stuff. Yeah, you can go on saying Malaysian movies are shitty, Malaysian bands are no good, Malaysian zines are trash, Malaysian writers suck. Since day one, I've appreciated local talents more. If I visit another country and pick up a fanzine or magazine, I would want to read about the bands and happenings at their place, not about bands from my country or hometown. Same goes if I send this zine to the UK, they should expect to read stuffs about Malaysia or Asia, not stuff about UK.

Hardcore punk makes people connect with people from around the world, and open their minds to new things, stuffs that they never known before. The way *Maximum Rocknroll* reviewed my previous issue (*Mosh* #13 in the November issue) is as if the reviewer is complaining "I can't relate to this zine because it mostly features Malaysian bands while I'm from the states" and at the same time writing for a worldwide hardcore punk magazine. Probably it's just me but that's the feeling I got when I read and reread the review.

Hardcore punk is a worldwide movement and each corner of the earth that has punk rock scene has their own styles, culture and stories. People should celebrate their own scene, their own style. Anyhow, it's your own scene. If you're too ashamed of your own scenes and bands, you could move to another country with the excuse that there were no real punks at your place. That has happened before and it can happen again. Yes maybe foreign bands and scenes are better compared to the bands and scene at your place, but my suggestion is to balance and support both of it. Support bands from both scenes.

No matter how shitty the bands from your village sound like, without your support and motivation probably they won't improve and won't go anywhere. Zines should review local releases and write honestly about the local bands so they realize where they stand and what people think about them. Good musicians should approach the newer bands and give words of advice, not ignore and talk shit behind their backs. What a waste of talent and knowledge if you just keep it to your friends and cliques only. With talent comes big responsibility?

When you don't write about local bands, and they start to appear in big magazines, you start to complain? Is that the way it should be? You don't expect foreign zines to write about the bands rehearsing at the corner of your street. Oh they're not good as Municipal Waste, why bother?
—Nizang Mosh

This is a really inspiring letter, and call to arms! Write about your scene, the sounds that are happening round you, the shit that you are experiencing rather than glorifying something that is happening far away. Fuck American/Western cultural imperialism! Punk and hardcore are cultures formed and deformed by their participants, local and international… It's easy to romanticize far away scenes and feel like there's nothing happening in your town, village, city… Shit I've heard punks in New York City complain that there's nothing going on there! Punk=DIY. Form the band you want to see. Write the zine you want to read. We at MRR *want to know about the bands that are forming on Malaysian street corners way more than we want to know about fucking Municipal Waste, so please send in scene reports and interviews!*
—Layla

Hey! Awesome letter and you are right, local scenes are where all of this starts. Keep in mind that the review you read is one opinion. Personally, I want to hear about and learn as much as I can about other scenes, as well as paying attention to my own. Punk is an international movement/subculture and learning about the differences, similarities and the music that is pouring out, can only make punk better. Thanks again for the letter and all your hard work on Mosh. As for me, your zine is killer, I love reading it.
—Mariam

Hi MRR—
I am blind and have a record label in Humboldt County CA. Meth Bog Records. I also play in some bands up here(Splinter Cell), and used to play in bands down there like Crutch & Big Ed, etc…

I sent in a 7" for review in December by the Underlings. Being blind for the last eight years, I have not been able to read *MRR* any longer… too bad for me. Since I have *every* issue from #1 until around 2004 when I got tired of trying to scan newsprint or have my wife read it to me!! It is too bad that *MRR* is not available electronically for my people! Someone there once told me it is not ever put to computer, and is still done old school. A friend, Sam Atakra, told me it is put to computer or e text at some point? Is it available to me now as e text or word docs? I would gladly pay for each E-issue!!!! Otherwise I am fucked I guess.

I have a new split 7" coming out soon with The Pack A.D. and Pure Country Gold.
Thanks for your time.
—Little Jimmy Forbes
Meth Bog Records

As of now MRR *is not available in any computer format... We do layout everything via computer nowadays, so there might be a way we can figure out how to provide access to the magazine for you. We'll let you know what we come up with!*
—Layla

To Steve,
re: Letter Section *MRR*#331-
No.
Sincerely,
—Robert

You like the Spits better than the Ramones??!! I like Die Kreuzen better than I like the Beatles.
—Layla

Dear MRR—
HELP ME PLEASE! This is if you can. You see I'm currently incarcerated, and as it is now I have over a decade left to go. I've been punk rocking for fifteen years. That's half my life. I love music, always have and always will. The thing is finding the music. What I am getting at here in the IDOC we are stuck with having to listen to the radio (suck) and tapes. There's only one place that I've been able to get tapes from. This place is called Park Central. The selection they have is very limited and the prices are crazy. Twenty bucks for some Electric Frankenstein, Circle Jerks, and up to fifty bucks for some Misfits and Black Flag. There are some cheap good finds. D.O.A., Stiff Little Fingers, T.S.O.L. But over all selection is very, very slim.

So do you know of *anywhere* that still has or sells punk, oi, ska, underground Rock'n'Roll, etc tapes? Even if I have to order out of the country. The only restriction is no screws, clear tape box, sealed and sent from a company of sorts.
If you know of anywhere and I mean anywhere, please let me know. I would be forever grateful and extremely appreciative.
Thanks,
Seth Weaver- R23304
251 N.Hwy 37
P.O. Box 900
Ina, IL 62846

Anyone got any ideas?What a scam! $50 for a tape!! I know Dischord, and maybe even SST have some tapes still available, but I can't think of a company that distributes tapes. There is a Polish company that makes underground punk and hardcore tapes, and I know a few labels over here distribute them, like Tank Crimes out of Oakland. If there are any people out there that could help the prison population get tapes for cheaper than those extortionate prices get in touch! We have a prisoner information sheet we mail out that we can add any pertinent info to...
—Layla

Hey Everybody—
Just saw the interview with Total Abuse the other day (*MRR*#331). It's so fuckin' ironic when they said that people hated them and that their reputation is "not the best." I know the guy who drove them around in Europe and I know what made him abandon them and kinda run away... A thing he never ever did before so it speaks for itself. These idiots tried to get someone set up a benefit show, hahaha and good luck, nobody did so.
Hope they'll never come back to Europe
—Greets
Berlin

They're coming back to Europe tomorrow; I said it was cool if they needed to crash at your place.
—Layla

Dear MRR—
Following the review of the KRIEGSHÖG LP in issue 331 I have a couple issues to raise:
1: The name of the band is KRIEGSHÖG not KREIGSHÖG or KREGISHÖG as you printed. Please let's not start a SIEGE Vs. SEIGE situation.
2: The correct name of one of the two labels releasing said record is La Vida Es Un Mus. Not La Vida Es Mus. Our website is www.lavidaesunmus.com instead of www.lavidaesmus.com as you printed.
Perhaps a printed note in the letters section may help those looking for a place to find the record.
Thanks for the review and keep the great job.
—Paco Mus

Our reviews editor is cowering in shame! He claims he was focused on the umlauts and lost all control.

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introducing...

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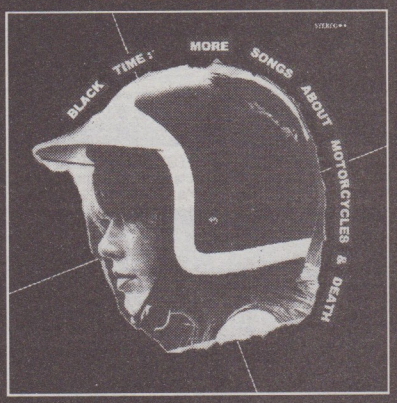

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COLUMNS

BRACE BELDEN is THE LAST PUNK

I was waiting for a bagel when I saw a woman die. She was old (all of 70 years I heard later) and crossing the street in front of me when a bus turned the corner and plowed into her—no, not plowed, it rolled, rolled right over her, and the noise it made was a great loud squish and then a split second later a thousand cracks. It sounded like fireworks. I stood dumb for a moment, then half-ran over and looked around at all the teeth on the ground like the beginning of snow. There wasn't much blood, at least on the street. Her face was destroyed, and I imagined a tire tread imprint but there wasn't any, just gristle and stuck-out bone, gaping mouth and I couldn't look anymore. A jogger bulging with well-toned careful muscles pressed on her chest to resuscitate her and it took me a moment to realize that this woman was in all likelihood going to die. When I grasped that she twitched and went.

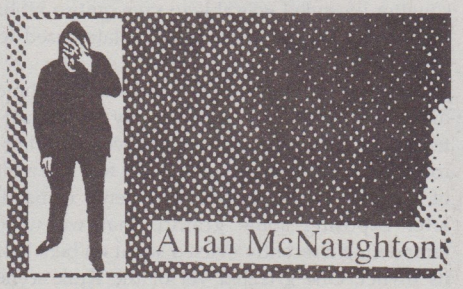
Half the time life is beautiful, mostly when you're out of the city, but sometimes when you're in it, though that might be a lie because I can't think of the last time I saw beauty here. Most of the time it's a death trap that I don't even want to think about and that I too often write about. There's a reason I (like most people) drink and (like some) take dope. There's also a reason I eschew new music in favor of the old, and that's not out of snobbery. With most modern groups, of really any genre you could name, there's but two emotions: confusion and love. Confusion—not hate, not anger—is the feeling that grips the pen that writes of injustice, of absent lovers and oppression. Love (or the loss of it) appears to be the reason most music is made in the first place, and if you think that's corny then you're just embarrassed.

But Crazy Spirit don't hail from either of these camps, and perhaps that is why they are creating such a stir. They're a toss-up, nervous without anxiety, half a snarl, half a sneer. "If anyone can make me cum I'll give them a medal," quips Walker, the band's irascible singer, when asked for comment on this article (the others could not be reached at all), and I think that sums it up. A return to the womb, as it was, a return to the dumb-smart retard-genius of a punk that once was. But does he mean it? Well, in the literal sense, perhaps not, if only for his lack of medals (and lack of "anyones," no doubt). But there's much behind that quote (the only one he would provide) that remains unspoken and thus unheard.

A friend related to me the other day a story, the details of which are rather pedestrian, but the ending remarkable. It seems an acquaintance of his, whose name escapes me for probably good reason, once upon a time masturbated twenty-five times in a single day. This is extraordinary. The sheer willpower to continue past five times has eluded me on the few occasions I've risen to the challenge (pun unfortunately intended), not to mention the pain involved. I can't even fathom what the tenth time would feel like, let alone the fifteenth. But the twenty-fifth? Words flash in dotted lights: inhuman, repulsive, Crazy Spirit. For the braggadocio, the gumption that my friend's old jerk-buddy showed in admitting his insane deed galls me the same way Crazy Spirit does. The fact that these four young men can, in less than a year, create more effective and engaging music than most groups can muster in their entire career is almost as offensive as it is true.

New York City, where this group hails from, seems to be in the midst of a renaissance of sorts (read: finally getting beyond Leftover Crack, who were worse than 9/11 for that town) when it comes to this stuff. There was a scene report a few issues back that talked in length about Crazy Spirit and their contemporaries (of whom I personally enjoy Dawn of Humans and Hank Wood and the Hammerheads, though that might be because they're the only ones I've heard). Judging from the ones I've met, they're not as simple or close-minded as many of the hardcore-types I've had the misfortune enough to come in contact with. They can't be, really—there are a lot of strange and somewhat exciting opportunities available to the less discerning alcoholic in New York City, and they'd be a fool to miss them.

But there's also a lot of suffocation to be had in New York City, and Crazy Spirit has that suffocation feel, tight and airless, wretched and horrific. They've got gang-boot march and high-end squeal, and the bass is "terrific." When I saw them live they were all spit and rhythm, for they are a very catchy band, and no matter how frantic the show becomes they maintain a smart pop mindset. But you don't give a shit about that, and likely you don't give a shit that they even reminded me of the Velvets in a way I can't explain, and please note that this is the first (and likely last) time I'll ever compare a modern group to the Velvet Underground. Not that the sound is similar, though you can hear shades of the first album on the Crazy Spirits 7" (no doubt unintentional), but the feeling is. I saw the band in New York City twice in a day, and flew home the same night. In the past two months, in which I've lost everything from my woman to my apartment to my self-respect, I've learned that no matter how you experience life, if the end result is suicide and madness and absolute fear, you can't help but look at the past with rose-tinted eyes. Even if one has spent their whole life under the cloven-hoofed beasts intent on providing the utmost misery, there's certain moments and objects that can almost average out all the hate and insanity that seep in through the windowpanes and crawl out from under the bed and strangle in the long night.



I only deal in ready cash, don't ask me for receipts...

Last month, preoccupied with thoughts of work, I regaled you, my kind readers, with tales from my first couple of jobs. I'll pick the story up now a couple of years from the point where I left off my previous column.

After a couple of years on and off the dole, and on and off various ill-fated training schemes, I quit (or was elbowed out of) my band and moved to Amsterdam. I got by with a bit of dole fraud, counting on the kindness of friends and strangers for temporary housesitting gigs before being grudgingly accepted into the squat scene. Eventually the meager amount of cash dried up, and I was forced to seek paid labor. It was as simple as putting an ad in the paper; I can't remember the exact wording of the classified, but it was something like "Strong healthy male seeks work. All jobs considered." Within days I got a call and was asked to turn up to a construction site the next day at 7am. Such was the lavish situation of the welfare state in Holland that the workforce pool of Dutch people who were willing to get up early and work on a

building site was tinier than a Jacuzzi in Smurf Village. I turned up and was promptly ordered to carry a pile of 45 lb. sacks of cement up a narrow staircase to the fourth floor. I hoisted the first sack onto my shoulder and climbed the stairs, then repeated the action without a break until the pile was gone. The owner of the construction company told me I had the job and to show up at 7 the next day. I was basically on cleaning duty. For anyone who hasn't worked construction, the amount of dust, garbage, and debris created by even the simplest remodel is unbelievable. All day every day I swept and carried wheelbarrow-load after wheelbarrow-load of trash from all four floors of the building we worked on out to the waiting skip. I was responsible for being at the site before everyone else in the morning and making sure that the coffee was on, and heaven help me if it wasn't strong enough. I worked with a couple of middle-aged, mustachioed Amsterdam carpenters called Bob and Henk. These guys were stereotypical working-class Dutchmen who couldn't really understand why I would move from Scotland to work on a building site in their country, but were patient with my halting attempts to speak the language and taught me a lot about the basics of construction. Eventually I got to try more exciting jobs, like framing, hanging drywall, tiling bathrooms, installing door handles and locks, etc., but I was basically the dogsbody. That was fine by me. Even though the wages were pretty low, it was under the table and with my no-rent squatter lifestyle I was able to save quite a bit of cash under my mattress, which I later used to travel to America.

Another perk of the job was bringing home discarded materials to enhance my own squatted living conditions, sometimes even with borrowed workplace equipment. I did feel like a bit of a traitor to the movement when I realized, after exposing some graffiti, that we were remodeling a recently evicted squat on behalf of its owner. One grizzled vet of the Krak scene assured me that I shouldn't worry; one summer, he had taken a job renovating his own squat after being evicted only weeks before!

My boss on the site was a guy named Harpert, whose dad owned the company. He was kind of a failed yuppie and was only working for his dad's firm because his own media production company had gone tits-up. He could be a dicky boss but he wasn't a bad guy on the whole. He seemed to enjoy chatting with me because it gave him a chance to show off his good English. For a while one summer he must have lost his dog-sitter or something because he started bringing his dog Nash to work. Nash was a beautiful black Belgian Shepherd, or Groenenendael. I was put on Nash detail, which basically meant taking the dog for a walk in nearby Vondelpark every afternoon. To some it might be considered a slap in the face to have to take their boss's dog for a walk, but I didn't give a fuck. Sunny afternoons chasing the critter around the park sure beat carting drywall dust down four narrow flights of stairs.

Speaking of the stairs, a peculiarity of traditional Amsterdam houses is that they are very narrow. At one time houses were taxed on their width, so the populace did the only smart thing and built the narrowest, tallest houses they could get away with. The resulting staircases ascend in such tight spirals that it's impossible to carry anything of any girth up or down them. Thus, most such houses feature large front windows and a hook protruding from the eaves to allow bulky cargo to be unloaded into the house via a pulley system. One day my boss thought it would be funny to hoist the building owner's bike up to the roof and out of sight while the owner inspected our progress. He'd come out to discover that his bike was gone, and would assume it had been stolen by one of Amsterdam's multitude of junkie bike thieves. Note: the Dutch take their bicycles *very* seriously. My boss tied the bike to the rope and, heave-ho, pulled the expensive black machine up until it dangled precariously in front of the fourth-floor window. Unfortunately, just as the building's owner was leaving the building, the knot slipped, leaving my boss holding the limp rope between his hands and looking on despairingly as the shiny steed crashed to the cobbled street below, buckling both wheels, raking the forks to an angle more suitable for a chopper, and basically rendering the thing unrideable. The look on his face was priceless. Needless to say the owner of the bike was not amused and dispatched Harpert to immediately purchase a replacement.

Eventually I took off for two months to explore the USA a bit, visiting the West Coast for the first time and falling in love with San Francisco. When my holiday was up I went back to Amsterdam and with one phone call was back working with Harpert, Bob, and Henk once again, but this time only temporarily: I told them of my intention to marry my American girlfriend and move to San Francisco. "Is zwanger zie?" ("Is she pregnant?") asked Henk, while making the international sign for "one in the oven," gesturing an extended belly. I assured them she was not.

I worked there a few more months, living in a great squat near the Rijksmuseum, before finally moving to San Francisco and becoming a permanent fixture on the shitworker list in *Maximumrocknroll*. And the rest, as they say, is history.

How to Draw a Barfing Unicorn: A Punk Drawing Lesson

If you are a fearless, pen-in-hand scribbler then pat yourself on the back and go eyeball the pretty comics. If you think you can't draw, or as my mother says "even my stick figures come out wonky", maybe I can tell you something to change your mind.

No matter what the grand narratives about high art, talent, and artistry will tell you, no one is born able to draw well. It may be true that some people pick it up quicker than others once they begin scribbling away in crayon, but we all begin bad at using our hands to make things. In fact, we all begin bad at everything. Babies can't do nothin' right. If you have some hand mobility and vision, I promise you can draw. You may think you aren't very "artistically inclined", but that just means it hasn't come as easy to you as it seemed to be for someone else. Suspend disbelief, and read on.

Lesson one: drawing what is.

Get a flat thing and a pointy thing; a thing to draw on and a thing to draw with. Paper, cardboard, walls, drunk person's face, whatever. Pencil, pen, knife, greasy finger, whatever. Don't worry about special tools or precious materials, that shit will just get in your way—at least at first.

Choose an object, preferably an immobile one, and look at it. Now for the tricky part, the key to it all: don't think about what it is, just see it. Study that ashtray, rotten couch banana, turntable, or houseguest and dissect it in your mind. Objectify it. Reduce it to shapes, and lines and colors, darker parts and lighter parts, pointy and smooth. Think of yourself as an alien landing in a strange world doing studies of the flora and fauna of this world. Do not draw what you think a banana ought to look like, draw the spotty smashed-on-one-end one you have. Be meticulous in your noticing. Your houseguest's head is eggy shaped, and one of her dreadlocks looks like Mt. Rushmore. If it is so in front of you, make it so on the paper.

Be bold. Make that drawing as best as you can. Now throw it away. Now make another. Do this all the time. Whenever you see something that looks particularly cool, or you are bored, or you need an excuse to avoid conversation, draw.

Eventually, one day, one sketch, one moment after I don't know how much drawing, something in your brain will click with your hand and your eyes. There will be a great revelation where you know that anything and everything is reducible to lines and smudges on paper. Then you will be drawing the object as it is, not how you think it ought to look or be. Then you will be past the symbol of the object (the stick figure, the house with a door and a window and a chimney, the circle flowers with semi-circle petals) and drawing the world as it is.

Lesson two: drawing what isn't.

Don't look now, invent. Think of something you've drawn or seen. What makes it look like itself? What details and characteristics are the most important? Maybe Amy has small eyes and a full moon face, and her nose crinkles when she laughs. Maybe the tree down the block leans to the right with its limbs sagging down like a tired boxer. Maybe the mouse who lives in your cupboard is a fuzzy teardrop with tiny petal ears and a curling tail, with teeth like two fork tines pressed together. If you get those parts right, maybe you can just wing the rest. They don't know your mouse, how will they know if you get it all right? They will see that it is mousey.

They will remember other mice with their forktine teeth and they'll see that you saw what they saw, and they'll be pleased.

Look at other people's drawings and paintings. They've probably figured out a way to bullshit what you're trying to bullshit, or maybe they've learned to tell the truth better than you. Either way, you can learn lots.

Everybody and everything is different. So don't try to be/draw perfect, just get the feeling right. If you want a perfect replica take a picture. This is about seeing, understanding, inventing.

Learning to draw is more about learning to notice, to pay attention than anything else. Get your eyes right and your hands will follow right quick.

Draw something that doesn't exist, that can't exist. Ask yourself: how is it shaped? What details make it itself? How does it work? If you know those answers you can make it believable.

Drawing a picture is like telling a story. Tell me what I need to know, tell me what you want me to know.

***

Just FYI, I learned more about drawing in the long boring hours of detention in high school than I did in my four years of art school. Also, lesson two does not have to follow lesson one, but for those inclined to think they can't rather than can, doing them in order helps a little.

Send all flyer masterpieces, napkin doodles, and (of course) comics to: arielawesome@gmail.com

A Punk Rock Christmas Story

Fucking Christmas. I fucking hate it. I gotta go buy fucking gifts for fucking idiots who insist on buying fucking stuff for me. I gotta pick out something they fucking might like, deal with fucking sales people fucking following me around asking if they can fucking help me, stand in long fucking lines, pay my fucking money for the fucking stupid present, and then eventually give it to the fucking asshole I purchased it for, and fucking smile. I hate it. It's fucking bullshit. I mean, I like the fucking colored lights and fucking trees and that fat fucking guy with the fucking white beard and red clothes and the fucking midgets that work for him and all that shit, but the gift of fucking giving drives me up the fucking chimney. So fuck it.

Or so I used to think.

But last night things changed. It was fucking weird. Fuck.

So, I was sitting on my couch, playing with Xbox 360. New game. *Halo: Reach*. I was kicking ass. Big time. I was on level fourteen, and there were only fifteen levels. I was like a fucking real Jedi Knight Commander Chief or some shit. Anyway, all of a sudden the fucking game freezes. Just like that. Like a fucking computer. I'm looking at a scene in which an alien is choking his chicken, excuse me, a chicken, well, some guy who's a pussy, and the screen freezes. Then goes blank. So I start to scream and yell and bitch at my television. I do that a lot. It makes me feel better, and scares the hell out of my neighbors. Especially the troll next door.

Anyway, so the screen goes blank, and I'm yelling, and all of a sudden fucking Sid Vicious shows up on the screen. The dead bass player guy from the Sex Pistols. I turn up the volume cause it looks like he is gonna say something. He doesn't. He just looks at me. So I change the channel. He's there too. So I change it again, and again, and he's on every fucking channel. He's like Ted Turner or something. So, I say, "Hey Sid, what's up?" He tells me not much. I ask him what he's doing on my television and he says he is here to visit me.

It is then I realize I am having a conversation with a dead punk rocker on my television. Whatever. I wonder why it's Sid, not Stiv or even G.G. I liked them better.

"Listen you bloody wanker," snarls Sid, "I'm here because I am a punk rock ghost."

"Yeah, well so is Johnny Thunders," I say, "but you don't see him here interrupting my fucking *Star Wars*-type game."

"Fuck that wanker. American elitist asshole. I'm the ghost of Punk Rock Christmas past," explains Sid, as he adjusts his lock on the chain around his neck.

I stare at Sid on my television. He is wearing a leather jacket, has spiked black hair, and is wearing a DESTROY t-shirt.

"So," I say, giving in to the fact that I'm talking to a dead guy on my TV, "is this like that movie? The one where that old guy in a dress carries around a candle and meets Tiny Tim?"

"Sort of," explains Sid It's hard to understand him, what with the stupid accent. "I'm here to show you Punk Rock Christmas Past".

"Okay," I say to him figuring the sooner he shows me whatever he is going to show me, the sooner I get back to *Halo: Reach*.

"Okay, wanker, watch the screen," explains Sid, and all of a sudden he vanishes, and is replaced by images of me when I was a punk rock kid. I see myself in combat boots, torn jeans, a Circle Jerks t-shirt, and leather jacket. It's snowing outside, and my curly brown afro is getting soaked.

"Big deal," I say to the television.

"Shut up and watch," the voice of Sid Vicious comes back at me.

I continue to watch. I see myself outside on some street somewhere. Snow up to my ankles. Some cute girl walks by and smiles at me. I smile back at her. As she walks past me, she turns and smiles again. I smile back, obviously too scared to say anything. She continues up the block.

"So I was a pussy, I was a virgin," I explain to Sid.

"Shut up," says the dead guy.

On the television I see myself still standing in snow, and some homeless guy walks up to me. He holds out his hand, and seems to be asking for change. I see myself reach into my pocket, then give him a dollar bill. I have money in my pocket. All Jews do. It's kind of like an unwritten law. You never know when you are gonna need it. Like wearing clean underwear.

"See, I'm a nice guy," I say to Sid, so maybe he'll leave me and my Xbox 360 alone.

"Continue watching," says Sid, in his snarly voice.

I see myself still standing in the snow. I must be waiting for something, I figure. Just then I see my mom come walking up the street. She's carrying a bunch of bags, almost too many for her. She is having trouble balancing them. In the bags I can see wrapped gifts. And then I remember. They were for me. My mom used to buy me lots of gifts. Underwear, socks, flannel shirts, more underwear, and pajamas. Clothes. Yuck. But then she also got me music stuff. Ramones albums, Devo albums, Clash albums, B-52s albums. Even that new wave Billy Joel album.

"Mom," I say to myself, under my own breath. I've missed her since she died a few years back.

"Miss your mommy, do you?" asks Sid, in a mocking voice.

"Shut up, dumbass" I say to Sid Vicious. I realize I sound like Butthead.

"Just keep watching, you lazy sod," says Sid. I do.

I see myself helping my mom with all the bags, and both of us carrying them into our apartment on West Fourth Street. As we enter the apartment, Nick, my stepfather, comes to our aid, and helps us with all the bags. We get inside, and close the doors, hiding ourselves from the city, snow, and outside world.

In the apartment I see a fire burning in the fireplace. Nick must have got one of those Duraflame logs at Sloan's. He couldn't start a real fire to save his life. My mom takes off her coat, and then places all the gifts she purchased under our Christmas tree. So what. I'm a Jew and I have a Christmas tree. I like Christmas trees. They are pretty and smell good.

"Remember?" asks Sid.

I nod my head "yes" as I watch the screen. As soon as my mom places the gifts under the tree, I pick them up, shake them around, and wonder what kind of gift I'm getting. My mom and Nick look at me. Proud. That I am their son. I wish I was really there, with them.

"Had enough, have you?" asks Sid.

"Yeah," I say, feeling my chest shake and tears well up in my eyes.

"You're a sissy," says Sid, and with that he appears on my television screen again.

"So, I used to like Christmas," I say to Sid, "But it's different now. She's not here any more. It's gotten so commercial. I don't need any more gifts. I'd rather stay home and jerk off. Santa Claus is a sellout. Like the hippies."

Sid just shakes his head at me, then flips me off. I am about to yell at him, but he disappears. Suddenly my *Star Wars*-type game is back on the screen.

"Weird," I think to myself. I consider lower-

ing my dosage of Prozac.

I continue to play *Halo: Reach*. Maybe what just happened was like a weird dream or something. Because I know, if it isn't, I am about to be visited by the ghost of Punk Rock Christmas Present.

Of course, at exactly that second, there is a knocking at my door. I pause the game and go to the door. I peek through the peephole and see Evan, the bass player of Furious George. I open the door for him.

"Hey George, man does my stomach hurt," he says as he walks into my apartment, "maybe it was the Twinkies and Snickers, or maybe it was just the McDonald's and Cheese Combos."

I go to hug him.

"What? Are you turning into a homo?" asks Evan.

I explain to him that I am glad to see him, and that Sid Vicious was just on my TV. That he was the ghost of Punk Rock Christmas Past.

"That's funny," says Evan, "I thought they'd send G.G. You liked him better. I liked him better. I toured with him, you know. His last tour. He pissed right near my head."

I tell Evan I have heard this story a zillion times.

"They could have even sent Stiv or Cheetah Chrome," says Evan.

I tell him Cheetah's not dead.

"Oh yeah," says Evan.

I ask Evan what he's doing at my apartment at this ungodly hour. Six o'clock. P.M. Breakfast time.

"Well, George," he says, not making eye contact with me, "I hate to tell you this, but I am the ghost of Punk Rock Christmas Present. Get it? 'Christmas present'?"

"Shut up, putz," I say to him.

"No, really, I am," says Evan. "Here, I'll prove it, touch me."

I tell him that I don't wanna touch him. That I'll be able to feel all the hair on his back through his leather jacket.

"Touch me and you'll see," he says.

I tell him no.

He tells me that if I don't touch him, he'll never drive anywhere me again. Ever.

I go to touch his shoulder, but my hand goes right through him. Like he's not there. A ghost.

"You're a fucking ghost," I say to Evan. My bass player.

"Ghost, shmost. I got a stomachache. Let's get this over with so I can go home and watch my new laser discs," he tells me.

"Whatever," I say back to my phantom friend.

All of a sudden I'm standing in the living room of some huge house I've never been before. There is a huge Christmas tree with lots of presents under it, and pictures of Jesus hanging on the wall.

"Recognize this house?" asks Evan, as he pulls a Nestle bar out of his pocket, and begins to nibble on it.

"You need to shave," I tell him. We have a show in a couple of days and I hate it when he looks all dirty and stuff. The kids want to see clean. I want to see clean. Facial hair. Yuck.

"I'm a ghost. Besides, I'm lazy," he says. "So," Evan continues, "do you know where we are?"

I tell him I have no fucking clue, and that corduroy pants are not punk rock. Neither are his wire rim glasses.

"Look around, George," he says, this time looking me in the eyes. It is then I'm convinced this is not the real Evan.

I continue to look around at the Christmas setting. A fire in the fireplace. Presents. And pictures of Jesus. Also a couple of dogs running around.

"In here, Mindy," says a familiar voice, and I see my brother, Simon, and his wife, Mindy, walk into their living room.

"This is Simon's new house," explains Evan, "a place you've never been."

"It's in fucking North Carolina," I yell at Evan, "the fucking south!"

Then I hear a baby cry, and I see my brother go into another room, and return with a baby in his arms. Harry. My nephew. That just turned one year old. And that I haven't seen yet.

"You and Spendy should be ashamed of yourselves," says Evan. I want to tell him to shove it, but he's right.

The baby cries a bit more, and Simon and Mindy cradle him. He quiets down, and I see the pride in Simon and Mindy's eyes as they cuddle their son.

"I sure wish George would come and see his nephew some time," says Simon, almost as if he knows I'm standing right there.

"I get the fucking point, Evan," I say to the ghost.

"Good, then we'll leave," he says, and all of a sudden I find myself in some swamp. The bugs and humidity are almost intolerable.

"Know where we are?" asks Evan.

"Florida?" I say.

"No, Thailand," explains Evan.

"Nice," I say, "Why?"

"Look," says Evan.

I do. I see a family of four standing near a body of water. They are swatting mosquitoes, and all are wearing sandals. As Evan and I approach them, I realize it is my brother Larry, his wife, Linda, and my niece and nephew, Amy and Aaron.

"Oh yeah," I say to Evan, "they are in Thailand for Christmas this year."

"Yes, George. When was the last time you saw them?"

I tell Evan I can't remember. I feel some guilt. But then I look at their shoes. Sandals. The guilt quickly goes away.

"Hey, it was worth a try," says Evan, and suddenly I'm back in my apartment, alone.

I pick up my Xbox 360 controller, and start to play *Halo: Reach* again. I figure I've got one more visitor, then I'll finally finish the fucking game.

I start to get into level fourteen, blasting away at the insides of a cloaked death-star, when the phone rings. I let the machine answer. I hear my own voice, followed by another.

"George, pick up the fucking phone, it's G.G. Allin."

To be continued...

I will be the first to admit that I'm not always the most insightful guy. In fact, one could say that most of the time I'm downright simple. I like beer, I like my dog, and I like my fukken raw punk. However, I do occasionally have a little slice of inspiration and listening to and perusing the liner notes of the new NERVESKADE LP provided me with one of those moments. Dig this: NERVESKADE are the *Mad Magazine* of punk. Seriously. Pogoing furiously on the line between parody and homage, decorating their record with interstitial drawings worthy of Sergio Aragones, ramping up the distort and the arrrrrgh to ridiculously high levels... it all fits. I'm not saying that NERVESKADE are taking the piss, just that the certain *je ne sais quoi* that makes them stand out so readily from their DISORDER/CONFUSE/GAI-worshiping peers is their willingness to embrace the completely cartoon-ish side of noise punk and make it the defining aspect of their band. This record is fast, it's tight (don't let the seeming sloppiness fool you, that's for show not for real) and it's over well before it wears out its welcome. If I have one minor quibble it's that the recording is a little vocal-heavy at the expense of the bass, but on the other hand this band really relies on the arrrgh of Gaz, so I suppose something had to give. This is sophomoric, it's juvenile, it might even be dumb, but it's fucking brilliant. One of the year's best releases in the style. (Black Water Records, P.O. Box 5223, Portland, OR, 97208)

In the "goddamnit-everybody-gets-to-go-to-Japan-but-me" department, France's STATE POISON have a new LP pressed up just in time for their Japan tour. I hope they had a great time (he said through gritted teeth). All jealousy aside, I'm glad I at least have this new platter to enjoy. This new recording draws very heavily from early/mid-'80s Japanese hardcore a la GAUZE, SYSTEMATIC DEATH, and GUDON with more than a dash of BASTARD influence as well (especially on the A-side closing "La Vie Toxique"). Unlike the earlier more noise-core influenced EP, this is mid-tempo to fast with heavily reverbed vocals, solos all over the place, and a welcome willingness to settle into a rocking groove on the choruses. Hell, even the basic chord progressions sound like classic Japanese hardcore style, and I can't not mention the awesome whistling part! While I might sometimes pooh-pooh a band that progresses musically only to lose their edge, I think STATE POISON have benefited quite a bit from expanding their songwriting style and really letting their chops shine. They've really mastered that GAUZE trick of sounding like you're playing really fast when

you're kind of not. It just feels hectic and out-of-control without ever really being that way (though to be fair sometimes they really are going fast). One more thing: the back cover of this LP totally should have been the front cover. I'm just sayin'. (Flower of Carnage, Marc Navel 2-4 Takamidai Kokurakita, Kitakyushu, Fukuoka 803-0838, Japan)

Let me take a moment here to admit something... I never really liked KYLESA. At all. I find them to be just a huge letdown after the brilliance of DAMAD, and every record they release just furthers my conviction that they'll never be a band I can get into. That's not apropos of much except that in Georgia's own NU-KLE-ER BLAST SUNTAN's *Blot Out the Worthless Sun* LP, I've finally found a band that can fill those deep, deep DAMAD shoes. NBS don't necessarily sound all that much like DAMAD, but they share the same quirky songwriting, ferocious female vocals, and interest in weird guitar pedal experimentation. There's definitely an ANTISCHISM influence in the mix, and probably a few HAWKWIND live records in the member's collections as well given how out there things get sometimes with the psychedelia. It's so great to finally have a new band that taps into that "Southern crust" sound that gave the world DAMAD and HIS HERO IS GONE (amongst others). If you get this LP and like it, I highly recommend tracking down the NBS demos as well. They've never written a dud song and there's another LP's worth of great material out there for the finding. (Severna Park Hardcore, WhyDoTheyLive@yahoo.com)

From the deep tradition of great Japanese regional compilations, from the many on MCR records to the mandatory *Tokyo Crusties* EP, comes the brand new *Future Is In Our Hands-Tsuyama HC Compilation*. From the depths of Tsuyama, a relatively minor Japanese city probably most famous for a murderous rampage (look it up!) comes this four-song, four-band EP featuring some of my very favorite new Japanese bands. First up are LAST, whose raw charging hardcore recalls a more d-beat influenced NOISE DISTRACTION. Good song, if a little short. They've got a new demo CDR, and this track definitely makes me want to check it out. Next are the nigh-infallible DISTURD, who are the best contemporary purveyors of stenchcore going today. Unsurprisingly, their track is the highlight of the record for me. 100% relentless driving metallic crust of a quality unparalleled since the STORMCROW LP. I hear their Black Water Records EP should finally be released soon-ish and I can't goddamn wait! THE SICK are total Japanese pop-punk reminiscent of CIGARETTEMAN or even THE PILLOWS. I'm a sucker for hooks, which this song has in spades, and I'd be interested to hear more from these guys. Rounding out the compilation are the mighty SKIZOPHRENIA (anybody want to sell me their EP?). Total fucking raw punk in the European '80s network of friends style. This a great compilation, though the cheap-as-shit vinyl may require you to turn up your anti-skate and maybe put a quarter on the needle to prevent skips. Ah well, punx is broke, right? (Hardcore Survives, http://hcsurvives.exblog.jp)

Finally I have for you a heads up on the totally excellent MINORTY XPOSE demo tape. I believe this is the second demo for these Sweden-loving Japanese maniacs, and it's a blown-out bass-heavy mess of reverbed vocals, simple riffs, and fucking pure punk noize. You know the drill: DISCARD, ANTI-CIMEX, BOMBANFALL, etc. are in the mix and that's a cocktail that doesn't need updating. I love the fact that their label has taken the name and font of the DESTRUCKTIONS' classic Vox Populi LP as their logo. That's a seriously under-appreciated record. There's a nice 2xLP DESTRUCKTIONS reissue out now. Go get that, get this demo, put some studs in your leather and come drink with me in the alley. It'll be great. (Vox Populi, vox-populi@hotmail.co.jp)

'S it for now. Buy me a beer and/or sell me your DEATH DUST EXTRACTOR 12". Sorry no CONTROL EP, maybe next month?

And again my column is pretty much the last one to get sent in, because apparently, I have not learned my lesson from the 29 previous, procrastination-laden years. This is the reason I can't be trusted to do much of anything on time. Maybe mix your band's hardpunk record if you bug me about it. Then again, maybe not. What can I do? God made me this way. Or if you're an atheist or a punk, or a punk atheist—society made me this way. Me—I'm neither. It's cool though, I own more punk recs than most people I know (Cooch/RJ/*MRR* library excluded).

I went to London for a week this past month. Every time I started asking about a band, they were from Birmingham. Then I came to realize the beloved and maligned Rich Bitch Studios was based in Birmingham too. I mean, I know the place sucks on paper, and most of the bands that recorded there don't have much good to say about it (Unseen Terror LP is quite limp), but *Behind the Realms of Madness* and *Scum* just wouldn't sound right to me any other way. The echoing guitars, the echoing drums (triggered, gated), the echoing vocals... It may be considered in poor taste, but I'm sure chefs think the same thing about Reese's Peanut Butter cups, it doesn't really make them right.

Made it over to see ELECTRIC WIZARD (they being from Dorset though, not Birmingham) on the 28th. Don't fret, purist readers, *Come My Fanatics* is the best British punk record of the '90s. No, seriously, it is. I mean that HEALTH HAZARD 10" sitting across my living room is pretty ripping, the FLAC torrent of *Beat the Bastards* sitting idly on my desk top has a couple of certified riffers, *Rush Hour of the Gods* is a respectable late-era entry for any band, and VOORHEES's output until they went metalcore was quite stellar. But all are unmatched in the level of grimy, thuggish nihilism, when compared to that doom band your ex-punk roommate rips the bong to every Wednesday through Sunday. And what a glorious sound it is. While not my personal favorite, *Come My Fanatics* sound of saturated, cassette hiss, overloaded guitar sounds, space-echo vocals, and almost non-existent rhythm section, gives a lot of "extreme" and "raw" recordings a run for their money. The ability level is strictly, and charmingly, amateur, and the lyrics com from an undoubtedly criminal mind. FUN FACT: after the making of *Come My Fanatics*, all members of the band (circa '96) were incarcerated. One for drug possession, one for robbery, and one for assaulting an officer of the law. Yes, many of you punks can say that A.C.A.B., but how many of you are certified cop-punchers? Hey, man, say what you will, but there are far less "punk"-sounding (or -acting) bands that have come out of the UK to be touted as "punk," and while brutality is brutality to me (punk or otherwise), I feel I should offer this up as a defense for any reader who might cry foul on devoting this much print to a band that isn't traditionally mentioned in a magazine such as this. *Come My Fanatics* is nothing if not a testament to filthy, basement-style recording sessions. I'm especially moved by it because, at a time (the '90s) when both heavy metal and a good deal of punk and hardcore had become sterile and surgical in their presentation, this one band had the gall to veer as far from that trend as one might imagine possible.

Anyway, the current incarnation of the band is quite formidable still, though admittedly not really relevant to much else in this magazine or column.

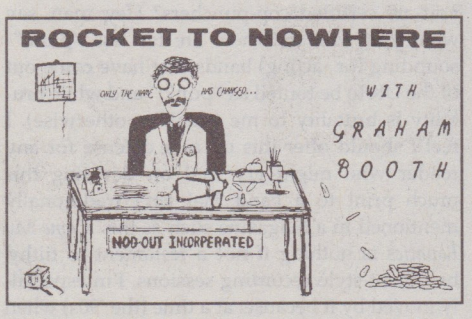
Originally I was trying to prepare a longer bit on mastering this month (which I've written about some before), but to be honest it just didn't come together (you can see I've honed my excuse-making through years of school—my homework is late because...). I've been really wrestling with a lot of mastering issues lately, though, going through the process of having several current recordings mastered to be released, and having it as a difficult experience for each.

In the case of one, it's actually a remastering job. I remember at the time of hearing the finished mastered version of the initial release of the album I felt like I'd buried the vocals in the mix, and for this I felt a little bad, because while I don't like super loud vocals, it didn't feel right for the record. Going back to my unmastered copy now, it's clear that a lot of vocal presence was lost when the record was mastered. Essentially the thing I find most frustrating about mastering is that it often does change some of the details of whatever you've worked on, and those changes may not really crystallize themselves to you until a bit later. I think if at all possible you should do an A/B test of some of the mastered and unmastered tracks, preferably

on your home stereo, where you try and identify any noticeable differences between the two. Ideally the mastered version will have a fuller and "sweeter" sound, without any major change in the dynamics of the music itself.

I find this gets trickier because for most people I talk to in bands, and doing labels, the mastering process is kind of an afterthought. It's something you're supposed to do, but really there's not much budget for, and no one understands terribly well. It's also the kind of thing where only a couple hours of time can rack up a hefty bill. No one really enjoys sitting around in a mastering studio hearing the same track played over and over for an hour while the engineer tinkers with all the dynamics in the sound. Your ears are exhausted quickly, and it quickly falls to just getting the job done.

I'd like to get deeper into this process in the future, but for now, it's at least something to think about.



Well, I'm officially back from my month long tour of US record fairs. I've traveled for the big shows in the past (Austin Record Convention and WFMU Record Fair in NYC), but never in consecutive weekends. I gotta say, I have a pretty massive record hangover. The trip was fun as hell, and I got to catch up with tons of people I've been missing. Unfortunately the "fun time" was totally eclipsed by the grueling job of buying and selling records at the same time.

Even though it was just two long weekends, I call it a month long tour. That's because the work started two weeks before I ever set foot in Austin, sorting, pricing, packing, taping, shipping hundreds of records to meet me in Austin and later NYC. I decided to step up my selling operation a bit this year to try and make some extra cash, which meant shipping about 1000 records, both LPs and 45s, in front of me.

The idea being if you have more records, you sell more records. This is definitely true. However, at the end of it all, you still have lots of records to contend with. Add in the additional hundreds of records you purchased over the course of the weekend(s), and you might end up with roughly the same amount of records you started with. This year I started with six heavy boxes and came home with five heavy boxes. All fine and dandy if you're driving across town to your local record show (well, kind of, but even lifting five boxes sucks at this point).

Then add in the task of shipping the stuff, not to mention the massive rush to carefully re-pack everything back up in a matter of minutes at the end of the show, and it becomes a heavy and stressful task. Especially when you've spent the three entire days waking up hella early, trading time between standing behind a table and crouching down on a cold hard floor digging through dollar bins. This is hella work!

I mention all this because I know several long-time collectors who do the same weekend record show circuit as a way to supplement their hobby and collection. It seems to make sense, since instead of just dropping a wad of your hard earned income on records, you set up to sell at the same show and hopefully break even: your collection pays for itself! Well, this definitely works. Unfortunately all of the additional stuff, like sorting/pricing/moving of really heavy records (a box of LPs weighs a ton!), sitting around all day being a salesman, is a pretty draining job. Yeah, it's fine the first few times, but after a while it becomes one of the worst things ever.

Also, as time goes by, the amount of good records, and good deals, starts to decline. The law of diminishing returns and such. When I started going to local shows, I was one of maybe two-three collectors who'd even touch punk stuff at a given show, and nothing would ever cost much more than $5-10, $15 was a lot! If you were diligent, and knowledgeable in semi-obscurities, you could kill it almost every time. As time went by, more people started buying punk records, not out of interest, just because they're worth lots of money, so there was competition.

More recently, as the internet has taken over, dealers have started to charge ten times what they used to for "these records I don't care about." Instead of clearing out their "garbage," they've realized that punk records are worth lots, and they get their prices straight from eBay. This is the first year that I heard people consistently complaining about seeing lots of great records, but the prices were usually 2x what any rational person would pay. So dealers went home with lots more records this year.

One of the perks of selling records at a record show is getting paid cash; that and not really having to do much work to sell a specific record. If you're the lazy type, you can literally just fill a box with records, put a sign on it that says $3 each or $5 each or $10 each and wait. Even pricing records individually is easy, just write 20 on a sticker and you're done. But you can't get internet top dollar for everything in the real world. Now more than ever, I think dealers are finally catching on that internet prices are often way inflated. They want to maximize profits by charging real money for genres they used to sell for a buck, but they don't have the interest or experience to know what actually sells for money to normal people, and what will just sit in a box and come back home with them every month.

I'm curious to see how record shows evolve in the coming year. Right now we're still in the era where all the information is out there, and everybody thinks they know everything. But people are starting to take some harsh tokes along with it. It's one thing to have the information, but it's another thing to be able to know how to use it. It's annoying that some records are literally impossible to find now, everyone eDigging with iPhones in hand. But I have to say, most of these people are no match for someone with years of experience and knowledge. Dealers are going to have to decide whether to keep carting out the same unsold overpriced records every month, or whether to accept the fact that they are just Joe Record Seller and mark their prices down for the locals.

Now that all that's off my chest, on to the finds… Austin Record Convention is a pretty weird show. It is *huge*. In a gigantic no frills warehouse space that hosts indoor flea markets and other such events. Honestly, it is one of the most depressing spaces I can think of, staffed by a young crew of juggalos no less! The lighting is yellow and patchy, so some areas are a bit dim to be reading covers and labels. And it is endless. I was there for all three days, and I didn't even hit half of the show. I saw most of the tables, but didn't have time to devote to looking closely at most of them. Of course, I was selling records, so I had to spend much of my time behind the table, but even so, my trusty tablemates were pretty forgiving about letting me go out and dig (Thanks Ryan! Thanks Jeff!). I think if I wasn't selling, it would probably take two eight hour days to see everything.

Just because there were lots and lots (and lots) of records doesn't mean they were good. There are tons and tons (tons!) of awful records sitting there. It's up to you to find the needles in the haystack. One reason that people do well there is that it's so overwhelming, nobody can cover everything. People literally just give up and won't look at certain tables. So that's one small advantage you have, and it's the reason that huge records are often pulled late on day three. Sadly I don't have any miracles like that to report, but I did find some stuff.

My best ARC find wasn't super cheap, still a fraction of what it's probably worth. It's not too often I'm able to cross off an active wantlist item. My eyes about popped out of my head when I spotted the seller's scrawl on a white 45 sleeve… KRIS METHE AND THE MISTAKES. There it was, a sleeveless copy of one of the most elusive and late KBD discoveries from Atlanta's KRIS METHE. Those familiar with the single may also know that the labels credit the band as THE SUSPEX. Great snotty punker circa 1982, I certainly never thought I'd see a copy.

Another record I'm stoked on is one I've wanted and had opportunities to buy many times over the years, Dallas, Texas' *Are We Too Late For The Trend* LP compilation. Some stock copies came out years ago, but all with a slight storage warp. I'd hoped to pick one of those up on the cheap, but it never happened. Finally found one at ARC, and this copy was mint in shrink without any storage warp. Stoked! This is thee early punk comp to own from Texas… VOMIT PIGS!

I grabbed some other cool stuff, but not much to talk about aside from an unexpected gift in the form of a CRACKED ACTOR 45! Actually my best find in Texas happened at a shop the day before. I found an ultra rare and still under the

radar 60s Psych 45 for a buck. The group is FREE AND EASY with their killer track "Séance." Honestly, the strength of ARC is in the miles and miles of cheap unknown crap all over the place. If you're the type who likes to take chances on new things you've never heard of, ARC is the place to be. Now that I'm back a few weeks later I've had some time to delve into my piles of dollar bin scores, and there is some cool stuff here. No unknown punk stuff, but I found a nice stack of obscure Hard Rock / Metal 45s and some cool New Wave/Synth stuff.

The other find in Texas was cold hard cash, and I was happy to have it a week later when I got to New York City for the WFMU Record Fair. You never know what you're getting into when you first line up to get in the door on Friday, and last year was pretty damn lackluster compared to previous years. The rush to get in was typically aggro, and I was kinda flustered since we took a long time to load our stuff in the door, while trying to patiently watch the mad dash around the room for newly opened tables.

Finally we got our stuff settled and covered, and could finally get to the matter at hand... finding records. I hit a nearby table that a friend was already at, and winced to see him pull a TARGET OF DEMAND LP for $20ish. I walked off in disgust trying to find a good table to get digging. The aisles at WFMU are much smaller than ARC, with a much denser layout, and this adds a bit to the frenzy, snaking around the maze of tables, trying to figure out how to get to that one table you can see in the distance.

I made my way around to a table I saw my table mate Justin furiously digging at, and judging by the amount of stuff it seemed he'd been through, I almost thought he'd made prior arrangements to get to dudes stuff. As I approached he was intently flipping through the longest box of 45s I've ever seen. All punk/new wave with a fair deal of cool to jaw dropping contents... JELLY BABIES 7", BUZZCOCKS Dutch picture sleeve, THOSE INTRINSIC INTELLECTUALS 7", MIDDLE CLASS *Out Of Vogue* 7" (oof!), THE NEWS Dirty Secrets 7" (yow!), all unpriced. This could be the deal of the century.

By then the crowd was forming, and Justin was nearly through the longbox from heaven. I heard the seller addressing one of the many hangers on, mentioning his other box of new wave, and I about lost it. "Can I see the other box of new wave?" "Oh yeah, sure, you've been very patient. Let me g..."

"Aw, come on! I'm almost through this box!" Justin complained. But it was too late. I was already 15 records in to my own extra-long new wave box, and I was pulling things left and right. Right up front was O-LEVEL *We Love Malcolm* 7" with a red sleeve I'd never seen, THE PRISONERS first 7" on Skydog, THE TIMES *I Helped Patrick McGoohan Escape* 7", THE TIMES *Red With Purple Flashes* 7" (Wow!), tons of new wave/DIY in this box geez, THE PLAGUE In Love 7" with silkscreen PS (Yes! Top Want!). The next one made Justin choke, THE QUEERS *Kicked Out Of The Webelos* 7", and with that he decided to get his own stack priced. The bewildered seller grabbed the stack from Justin and went one by one through the stack doing rudimentary math in his head. I'm sure everybody else standing there figured he was charging 10-20 bucks a pop, so everyone literally backed away when the seller exclaimed $1800. Yowza!

As I finished with my box, Justin had the seller make his stack into priced piles so he could make a decision. Of some twenty 45s he'd pulled, he settled on just one, the MIDDLE CLASS 7" and left the rest for us poor souls to fight over. By this time another guy had gotten into the fray, and the seller was now pricing a stack for him while I stood there waiting. This turned out to be an excruciating process, since it literally took fifteen minutes of my valuable time standing there watching broke dude hem and haw over what three $20 records to buy out of his own "$3000" stack.

I looked up at one point to see my friend Chris across the aisles pointing at the NERVOUS EATERS *Just Head* sleeve he was holding in his other hand. Ooof!! He was over at the table moments later where I could make out the $20 pricetag on it, and he showed me the other contents of his own stack. The other killers were UNNATURAL AXE *They Saved Hitlers Brain* 7" and AVENGERS *We Are The One* 7" with Crucifix sleeve which were priced higher. As it turned out, Chris had known his local shop had turned up a big Boston collection, and knew they would be selling it at the record fair, so he had a bit of an advantage. Still, that was easily the best punk score of the fair, and that NERVOUS EATERS was arguably the best punk record to trade hands.

Back to my pile. The seller's first comment was that THE QUEERS is the bootleg. Boo-Hoo! At least Justin may not kill me now. I asked him to just make stacks for me so I could decide what to take. As it turned out, he seemed to value UK DIY singles far below what he valued most of the stuff in Justin's pile. I grabbed O LEVEL, both TIMES, GIFTED CHILDREN (another TVPs side project on Whaam!), JELLY BABIES, THOSE INTRINSIC INTELLECTUALS, VOM, THE PLAGUE and a few others, and I was happy to have my cash wad from Austin in hand.

I picked up a few other big things for my collection from other people, most notably the mega rare MIRRORS *Shougeki-X* 7" from Japan, one of few early punk monsters from the land of the rising sun. Also finally got a sleeved copy of the REACTIONS *Love You* 7" a punky powerpop monster from Florida, THE NOISE *Let's Have Some Fun* 7" a tough early punker from Kansas, SNIVELLING SHITS *Terminal Stupid* 7" rare UK press with paper labels, and a SCROTUM POLES 7" another UK DIY punk classic with much needed elusive insert.

Other crazy records obtained include... FRICTION *Crazy Dream* 7", FUN 4 7", the first two ATTENTAT 45s, CHEATERS *Man As Hunter* 7", ARYAN DISGRACE 7", the QUICK *In Tune With Our Times* 10", NASTY FACTS 7", MENTALLY ILL *Gacy's Place* 7", LEGIONNAIRES DISEASE BAND 7", and a ton more. Maybe crazier was the sheer amount of rare to super-rare punk and hardcore records on display at the plethora of punk booths. I won't say that every rare punk record was available, but if you had the cash, you could surely put a big dent in your wantlist. Unfortunately not too much of it was priced to sell, though prices were fair.

So that's it for the fall record show season. At this point, selling at a record fair seems like a no brainer to help supplement my buying, but it gets to be a grueling task over time. I'm not sure I would do both shows again; I definitely wouldn't travel with so many records. It seems like it's best if you can carefully cull a box or two of records to sell at a friend's table to make a little extra cash. If you want to make money selling records, they have to be cheap and plentiful, which is a difficult prospect if you're travelling very far. I was happy with the records I came home with, but if I'd missed out on one or two of my lucky moments, I probably would've come home angry.

Don't Blame Me... I'm From Massachussetts

The above phrase was a popular bumper sticker in my beloved home state after Richard Nixon was reelected for a second term in 1972, winning 49 of 50 states over George McGovern. The one holdout? You probably figured it out by now. And boy did we (well, I was too young to vote) look smart when Nixon had to resign following the Watergate scandal. A good ol' "see, I told you so" raspberry to the rest of the country.

I thought of that bumper sticker and wondered if it might be time for a new batch after the recent mid-term elections, where the Republicans gained control of the House and picked up several Senate seats. Fortunately, some of the teabagger lunatics like Sharron Angle from Nevada, Christine O'Donnell from Delaware, and Ken Buck from Colorado didn't win. Nor did the truly psychotic New York Republican gubernatorial candidate Carl Paladino. His "concession" speech had him at the podium with an orange baseball bat. He had originally promised to go to Albany to bash in skulls or something like that. And the gist of the speech was that new Governor Andrew Cuomo better damn well do what the people want or he was going to get smashed over the head with that bat. Maybe that wasn't *exactly* what Crazy Carl meant, but I'll bet he was thinking it. He did threaten to "take out" an editor from the *New York Post* who asked him some questions he didn't like. And I assume he didn't mean to dinner.

Here in Massachusetts, though, we averted the teabag rampage. All the statewide offices went to Democrats, some better than others, but the governor, Deval Patrick, was elected over

Charlie Baker, the former CEO of an HMO here, and a third party candidate, Tim Cahill, who was to the right of the relatively moderate Baker. All the incumbent Democratic congressmen (once again, some better than others) were reelected and a Democrat, Bill Keating, won the open seat over a Republican named Jeff Perry. Mr. Perry used to be a cop and was involved in covering up a couple of incidents where one of his underlings illegally strip-searched two teenage girls and did four years. In my own district, there was a scandal with my rep, John Tierney, after his wife pled guilty to laundering money for her brother, but Tierney apparently wasn't involved. The result was closer because of that incident but he still won because his opponent, Bill Hudak, was a "birther" and had a sign with Obama dressed as Osama during the '08 election.

Hudak wasn't as much of a loony as some of the candidates around the country, such as Dan Webster in Florida, who knocked off Alan Grayson, one of the more liberal reps. Grayson had become something of a liberal folk hero after he made a name for himself with his speech during the debate on health reform. Grayson said the Republicans' health plan was that the uninsured shouldn't get sick or, if they do, die quickly. Look it up on YouTube—it's quite a performance. But Webster's "guru" is an evangelical minister who believes in Christian Reconstructionism. Among other things, that sect recommends stoning for adultery, murder, and witchcraft. It also states that women will be submissive to men. Ads supporting Grayson referred to Webster as "Taliban Dan" and I imagine that didn't help too much in his district in Orlando, Florida, which might as well be called Jesus-Land. Conservatives talk about how evil "Sharia Law" would be in this country, but it's hard to see that much of a difference between those beliefs and the ones that some of the radical Christians espouse. They're *all* fucked. I'm actually amazed that Grayson—who is Jewish—was able to get elected in the first place, but he only lasted one term. Pity—we need more congressmen named Al (his full name is even spelled the same as mine).

I could be here all day expounding on more of the characters about to invade DC, but I'll spare you. And I always realize that some of you don't vote, saying there's not an ounce of difference between the two major parties and that they're both controlled by the corporate interests. *C'est la vie*, I guess. And I'm *grateful* that this ugly campaign, fueled by millions in money from various lobbying groups, is over. No more hitting the mute button once those ads come on—except for the ones that made me laugh, like one that said Hudak was a "kook" and "dangerous". It makes me appreciate the cheesy furniture store commercials all that much more. But every time I see presumptive speaker John Boner, uh, Boehner's pumpkin-faced mug or Sarah Palin's or any of the Fox-tards, who are essentially the propaganda arm of the Republican Party, I feel like pulling out my hair. At the end of the day, I like the fact that Massachusetts is perceived as being out of touch with Middle America. In fact, I'm downright smug about it!

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So during the just-ended election season, I engaged in my usual diversions of watching sports (not too many political ads but I don't think I ever need to see a Burger King breakfast commercial again) and listening to tunes. I still didn't make a lot of headway with the review pile (story of my life) but here are some highlights:

Since I'm showing some home-state pride, here's a band that makes me proud to be a MassHole. CONFINES are a new-ish Boston band including people from CUT THE SHIT, BLANK STARE, and others. Their debut 7" *Withdrawn* is an intense package, both from a musical standpoint as well as the visual/written elements. For the aural component, this is a ravenous, brutalizing hardcore sound with some Ginn-ish guitar lines and powerful arrangements that incorporate thrash and cascading bash. As for the latter, there's a fold-out poster sleeve that includes the lyrics but also a two-panel handwritten treatise of sorts displaying, to greatly simplify things, not only a tremendous amount of outrage and disappointment with the continuing ascent/re-emergence of regressive political policy, but also a scathing critique of people involved in punk and hardcore—pointing out that there seems to be more concern over social acceptance and a ready willingness to conform to what's accepted. In the meantime, the world is collapsing, the political situation is fucked up, and the author wonders where the outrage went. The critique turns inward, as well. I probably left something out but even if you have trouble following the text, there's no missing the agitated vocals and unsettling music. I imagine the national election results will only increase the intensity next time around. (Labor Of Love: 56 Pearson Rd., #2, Somerville, MA 02144, ittsalaboroflove@gmail.com or Side Two: 6 Wadleigh Place, Boston, MA 02127, sidextwo@gmail.com)

The other Mass. band, VILE BODIES, is essentially a continuation of CONVERSIONS, with the musical core of that band joined by vocalist Jeff Walker (SLEEPER CELL/BALANCE OF TERROR/BLOODY GEARS). The modus operandi remains the same—challenging, dynamic music that works in straight hardcore with noisier/atonal elements, often within the same song; "The Healer" is one such example. The playing exhibits a tremendous amount of skill as they effortlessly maneuver through the different musical aspects. As with CONVERSIONS vocalist Terry Cuozzo, Jeff offers a howling approach that syncs up perfectly. Complex but not so much that it dilutes things, VILE BODIES are very much a hardcore band, but without the standard trappings. (vilebodieshc.blogspot.com)

From Spanish label Trabuc Records comes a 12" by CONCENTRATION SUMMER CAMPS titled *Amour Et Sourires*. The band's name might make you cringe and the psych-o-delic cover might have the same effect but I think it's kind of cool. Looks are deceiving, although the final song, "Coffee and Coke", is an extended garage/psych mind-messer. The rest of the time, CSC specialize in hardcore punk with tunecraft and drive. Innovative guitar playing, a little East Bay Ray here and there, but there are other things going on in the sonic mesh. And it should be noted that "Discharge Were Right" doesn't *sound* anything like DISCHARGE, although the words reflect that band's worldview. No easy pigeonholing here, and that's a refreshing asset.

Two other new Trabuc releases feature bands that ply a melodic, mid-tempo punk sound along the lines of INSOMNIO or NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS. On DISPARO'S self-titled 7", the first song, "No Quiero, Ser Como Tu," comes off fast and heavy at the outset but that's kind of an anomaly here. The lyrics are in Spanish with English translations and willing to provoke, such as "Estrellas de David", about Israeli aggression, which probably won't win them much of a Zionist following. I imagine DISPARO would have little problem with that. NO ESCAPE are in the same ballpark and their *Generation Trap* EP features buzzing guitars and sturdy, lively bass-playing/drumming, although it doesn't make an exceedingly strong impression overall, falling into that "pretty good" realm. (Trabuc, PO Box 160, -46740-, Carcaixent (Valencia), Spanish State, www.nodo50.org/trabucrecords)

I like to post video clips on my Facebook page and recently shared clips from some of the classic Finnish hardcore bands. A friend on there asked if I had checked out any of the newer bands and mentioned LAPINPOLTHAJAT. As a matter of fact, I was reviewing their self-titled 12" that very day. These guys definitely mine their country's hardcore heritage, a sound that's both muscular and melodic. There's plenty of presence without being overly heavy-handed. No metallic blowtorch effects here—the guitars burn but with a more tasteful selection of lead licks, alongside bass playing and drumming that relies as much on finesse as force. LAPINPOLTHAJAT offer proof that classic Finnish-style hardcore is alive and well. (Hohnie: www.hohnie-records.de or Roku: www.rokurecords.com)

Getting back to some US hardcore, I've got a couple of bands who seem to completely have the world up their collective asses and are having one hell of a time expelling it back through the poop chute. BAD AMERICAN hail from Bethlehem, PA. Their self-titled 7" features some mightily pissed-off emanations. I imagine if I lived in Bethlehem, PA, I might be pissed off too. Well, more pissed off than I already am. Or maybe it's a nice place—someone will have to fill me in. Anyway, this is raging hardcore that thrashes about half the time and pounds away at a slightly slower pace the rest of the time. "Rodent" has a pretty sinister, noise-drenched intro before picking up the pace and it comes across like early stuff from TOTAL ABUSE. Did I mention they sounded pissed off? No sarcasm, here—I like this band's pissed off sound. Oops, there I go again. (852 N. Clewell St., Bethlehem, PA 18015, www.myspace.com/badamericanpunk)

WORMEATERS don't sound all that happy, either. For their third 7", *Wardeath*, the band have added a new vocalist named PJ, and his pipes are as nasty as his predecessor's, albeit higher on the timbre scale—and, to be honest, he's an improvement. Blazing, angry, fast-paced hardcore, although there's the slower, equally crazed "Scabs" to wrap things up. There's nothing as graphic as the forced prison sex lyrical theme for "Dutch Roulette" that was on WORMEATERS' previous 7", but they haven't gone pop or anything, nor have the lyrics gotten any sunnier. Nope, not a chance. Their best stuff to date. (Sorry State, www.sorrystaterecords.com)

Finally, there's the second album by the ESTRANGED, *The Subliminal Man*. Things are perhaps a bit more polished this time around, but that shouldn't be construed as a softening in sound. There's always talk of how much this Portland band is influenced by the WIPERS, and it shows up in some of the guitar lines, no doubt. There's no missing the Sage-isms for "Statue In A Room", previously released as a single (this is a new version, though), and it's the strongest track here. Haunting, hooky, propulsive, and emblematic of the musical synthesis they've created during their existence. The other aspect of said synthesis is what was good on the other side of the Atlantic during the emergence of post-punk during the late '70s/early '80s. There's the melodic yet intense emotionalism of THE SOUND and, as I've mentioned before, strains of early CURE and BANSHEES. I hate to be repetitive but that's still accurate. As if to prove my point, they cover the UK band the FLYS' song "Love and a Molotov Cocktail"—and the 1977 original was post-punk that was ahead of the curve. And while I've spent half this review mentioning other bands' influences, I'm not being trite (honest!) in saying these guys have found their own identifiable sound and possess the songwriting/musicianship to back it up. (Dirtnap, 2615 SE Clinton St., Portland, OR 97202, www,dirtnaprecs.com)

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Before wrapping things up, I'm pleased to announce that Sonic Overload radio has a new website, www.sonicoverload.net. As always, there's a new show each Monday and the files are now at a higher bit rate.

Al Quint, PO Box 43, Peabody, MA 01960, suburbanvoice@earthlink.net

This month I want to talk about some bands/records I've been into of late.

First off, my favorite record of the decade so far by a wide margin is the self-titled LP by HERATYS. This LP came out last year on Never Enough records and hasn't been super easy to find in the US, but it's worth the search. From the first needle drop this LP knocks it out of the park. Absolutely blazing Swedish hardcore punk, sung in Finnish. Peter from SKITKIDS / SCD / SCUMBRIGADE / HARDA TIDER is in this band and this guy can do no wrong. Some people thought this band sounded too much like TOTALITAR, but I question how that could be a bad thing, and they have enough talent and zeal of their own without just sounding derivative. Furthermore the vocals are in Finnish, which is in my opinion the best language for hardcore. HERATYS just released a 7" too on Hate Records, and it's also a rager.

ELECTRIC FUNERAL *Make Noise Not War* 7" – This Swedish band blasts out a wall of total fuzzed-out hardcore in the DISCLOSE style. Kind of ironic that this is Swedish guys copying Japanese bands who copied Swedish bands, but it's raging enough for you to forget the irony and just pump your fist. Members of WARVICTIMS, who have been holding it down for D-beat raw punk for some time now.

CÜLO *Military Trend* 7" —I read about these guys in *MRR* before I heard them. In fact, I think they played a house show in Minneapolis before I was hip to them. Now I get the record and see what I'm missing. This band is few years late for the '82 revival, but bringing it to the plate in a totally legit but original way. Further proof that, like giving typewriters to monkeys and hoping they will eventually type *Hamlet*, as long as there are bored, alienated suburban kids, there will be great raw angry hardcore punk.

VALIUM KIHARAT *Kierri* 7"—This band just emailed me about distributing their 7", I took a chance on it, and my heart sank when I opened the box and saw the colorful kind of abstract cover. I feared emo or metalcore, but when I dropped the needle I was sold. This is straightforward Finnish hardcore punk. It's not super fast or thrashy, but each song is well structured and memorable with great vocals in Finnish. There's an excellent PARTISANS cover tacked on as well.

LAPINPOLTHAJAT LP —Another killer from Finland. Very cool hardcore *punk* in the '80s Finnish style. Melodic and snotty with a lot of punk influence (as opposed to thrash), catchy songs in the style of APPENDIX and LAMA. The cover collage is kind of weak, but I guess I see what they were trying to go for, sort of a spoof of '80s collage LP cover art?

DISHONORABLE DISCHARGE *Uskyldige Mennesker Sulter Og Lider* 7"—This band is from Norway and I think they have another 7" I haven't been able to track down yet. Rampaging crusty hardcore that has a distinctly dark and evil Norwegian sound (the desperate vocals and wailing guitar?). A touch of metal without being too metallic, just pounding hardcore crust.

AUTISTIC YOUTH *Idle Minds* LP—I really liked this band's previous efforts and enjoyed them live. This LP just builds on their past great work. It's hard hitting melodic hardcore punk that balances the melody with the drive of hardcore. This LP reminds me a lot of early SoCal bands like ADOLESCENTS, SHATTERED FAITH, and SOCIAL UNREST, and more contemporary bands like THE OBSERVERS, THE VICIOUS, the RED DONS, and the ESTRANGED. But while some melodic punk bands have been veering into sensitive rock territory and sounding a bit too much like the CURE, these guys are still rooted in hardcore. I like the mix of songs on this LP from more punk to more hardcore but keeping it cohesive.

Not too dissimilar sonically is the new LP by THE RED DONS, *Fake Meets Failure*. I really enjoyed their last LP *Death to Idealism* and this one is great as well. These guys just crank out song after song of straightforward melodic punk with some hardcore influence, great somber vocals and attitude.

That's it for me for this month, just listening to records and raging in the basement.

Normally, I'd feel slightly insecure talking about being on the motherfucking road. It's been my experience that most people who talk about being on tour all the time are dickheads. You know, those assholes from some super-weak, fourth-tier hardcore band from San Marcus called "Forever Our Fight" or some bullshit like that. You know the type. This is the asshole who usually ends up dating the super-hot bartender who's only let like maybe one dude touch it. Probably wears a fedora. He's the kind of guy who reads Tolstoy at bars. Regardless, its like one of those things you don't really talk about unless those people know what the deal is. However, I feel that being the living authority on hardcore punk and all-around punk superstar ambassador for America, it's my job—no, fuck that, my duty—to share some pearls of wisdom with you cretins. *MRR* is no stranger to columns about DIY touring, and lord knows I'm no Felix Havoc, though I do like guns a lot. What I am is the future. Not because I'm the shit or anything, but because you old fuckers are too old and you young fuckers can't get past listening to side B and rocking the hoodie/denim jacket combo. Let me take you on a journey through DIMW punk touring. Doing it my way.

Booking your tour.

Book Your Own Fucking Life was a great resource during the '90s. However, the '90s are over and sucked in the first place. If they still print that piece of shit it's gotta be a terrifyingly vile rag (and for sure printed with soy ink). Matt and I used it for our first tour years ago and, let me tell ya, that shit was rough. We showed up to some woman's house, I shit you not, called "Buttercup," and ended up playing a "punk" prom at an Area-51-themed roller skating rink

for about three people. You got cell phones and the internet now. Use that shit. Old people are gonna tell you it's cheating, but fuck them. They're all gonna die soon anyway. Y'all know about GPS yet? It's the jam. You just type in the address or any other historical point of interest and some (I presume fine) British lady tells you how to get there. No more stupid confusing Mapquest print outs strung all around the van, cluttering up the place. It's magic. If you wanna be a fucking Luddite, go have at it, I'll be at the St. Louis Radisson having a hell of a time, and I'm gonna get there about two hours ahead of ya. I'm not talking 'bout no goddamn Myspace. Myspace is for children. What you need to do is find the e-mail for that guy you met in Florida you stayed with for a couple days. It's all about networking, people. Make a nice impression on folks, say some funny shit, maybe stay up doing blow with 'em till dawn. Pick your poison. Just ask people. Tell them you wanna play an all ages show, tell them you wanna get fed and need a place to stay. It's that simple. If you don't have that, then goddamnit, don't leave Kansas. Not dogging on Kansas, could be anywhere. Here's the deal. If you have to write random motherfuckers in every town in the goddamn country, please please please don't go on tour. It's a dick thing to say, but I don't wanna see your band play. I'm sure its great. I bet you guys have a lot of fun doing it, but I could give a shit. Going on tour is just like putting out a record. Not everybody should do it.

The Van.

This one is a real motherfucker. Matt and I owned a van together damn near ten years ago. I say "together", but what I really mean is that Matt paid for it and I drove it to work five days a week. It was the biggest piece of shit on four wheels. There was a sawed-in-half couch for a back seat, holes in the floorboard, no heat, and no radio. At one time there were also no brakes, and a slight gas leak. If memory serves he paid about $600 for it, and we drove that goddamn coffin up and down the West Coast. To say it was a rewarding experience to make it that far and back wouldn't be fair. It was fucking horrible. Keep in mind we were new jacks back then. *BYOFL* style. It was that same tour where we met "Buttercup." Once we even spent a bunch of money renting a super nice van from a local company in Austin. A two-week tour cost us about 2000 bucks. Luckily one of the fellas had a credit card so we were able to pay it off in about two months, but yo, seriously, fuck that. Eddie and me blew up a van in New Mexico with all our shit in it. Hans slashed the tires of one and pushed it in a ditch (we ended up paying handsomely for that shit). Vans are a fucking cancer for punks. They can show you the world but at the same time literally ruin your life. If you got the money and all you assholes really like being around each other that much, go ahead and buy a nice one. Or I guess buy a shitty one if you know how to fix it. My new shit is paying someone to drive you around. I'm an important guy, and frankly I can't be bothered with such menial things as driving myself. Hell, right now I got this Spaniard with a van driving me through France this exact second. Fucker barely sleeps, just drives and cooks. Its great—every single one of us is drunk as hell, and it doesn't matter. "Eduard, let's go get a kebab." That's what's up. Also, been really into flying to places lately. Driving is pretty much some Stone Age bullshit. Embrace change, get you some Southwest flier miles, and get after it. Tell me you don't like peanuts. Tell me. Plus if you fly overseas you get a free toothbrush.

Picking the Perfect Roadie.

Jesus, this is a tough one. However, it's also in my opinion the most important. This is a person who is supposed to pick you up from the depths of hell. This is a person who is there for you and only you (and everyone else, of course). This is the motherfucker you make fun of for hours and hours on end based on their hairstyle, failed relationships, substance abuse problems, upbringing, whatever. This person collects money, finds drugs, gives up their drink tickets, cleans your puke, wipes your ass (has happened), holds you while you cry your eyes out (has also happened). There are many schools of thoughts on the subject of taking a roadie and what qualifies as a good candidate for the position. Obviously you have to have an aptitude for the job, and don't forget that's what it is: a job. The roadie must want to be there. If you don't feel like doing it, then player, stay at home. This is the last person you want bitching about how much they miss their girlfriend. A roadie's gotta be dependable, yet kinda wild. Just to spice things up. Having that extra person around to break the tension is an integral piece of the puzzle. I've been on both sides and still support having one around. Who wants to worry about all the responsible crap? Let the asshole that gets a cut of y'all's free dinner deal with that shit.

For all the roadies out there: it's gonna suck. Sometime you ain't gonna have that sleeping spot. Maybe you don't get that last piece of bread. Sleep first, eat last. First one in the club and the last one out. Suck it up, fucker. You don't have a fucking job anyway, nor do you have anything better to do. Just do the fucking dishes, and for god's sake clean the trash out of the fucking van. You gotta make some jokes. You have to stay up late so the driver doesn't crash the fucking van. It's you. Even if they treat you like shit, remember that actually you're the boss. That's some power right there. You got all the money, right?

Oh shit, I almost forgot: do not fuck the roadie. Trust me. Don't. One more thing: try to be nice to people at the merch table no matter how much they are begging for it. If they wanna see three different sizes of a ten-dollar shirt, just let 'em, but if they put a beer on the records, feel free to throw it in their faces. I hate that. We all do, actually. If you wanna have a conversation about blah blah whatever the fuck, take it elsewhere, not right in front of my table. I got bills to pay.

Big ups to all the real hustlers still living the dream. Greg Daly, one love. Big Moe. Team Collins. Joe. Lanny G. All the other road dogs out there. You are appreciated. Thanks for the laughs.

I'm a simple man. I appreciate simple things. I like flannels, boots, slips-ons, and cigarettes. Now, don't be a cunt. Don't bring a giant bag full of shit you probably won't use anyway. Example: I went on tour a few years back with a dickhead who brought a comically large box of Q-Tips. I'm talking 2000 Q-Tips. Are you fucking with me? Ridiculous. Here's what you do: you take about 30 out the box and put 'em in a Ziploc bag. Boom, done. Footwear. Two pairs of shoes: one pair of boots and one pair of sneakers. Trust me, I can appreciate how nice it is to be fresh everyday, but that's not really the game. It's about practicality. Plan on wearing the same shirt somewhere around three times before you get a chance to wash it. Now, just rotate out a different shirt every day so you only wear it every once in a while, thus creating the illusion of cleanliness. Every day someone will talk about doing laundry, but don't be lured in by this. It never really happens, and if it does somehow your shit will get fucked up. So for a month-long tour, bring five shirts. No more, no less. Five. Two pairs of pants. A shit ton of socks and undergarments, if that's your thing. A good sleeping bag you straight up love being in. This is your bed. Take care of it and respect it. Don't get drunk and piss in it. Don't fuck in it. It deserves better than that.

Most important of all this bric-a-brac is the backbone of any successful DIMW tour. Yes, my friends, I'm talking about sweatpants. Yes, the ones covered in jizz and lord knows what. Yeah, the black ones. One night on a little weekend gig to probably Houston or some shit, after a long night of partying I look up from my sleeping bag and see my buddy Pfeffer's bare ass. Confused, yet intrigued, I continued to gaze at it like a goat looks at an apple at a petting zoo. No, I didn't wanna touch his ass. I was just so jealous of the sweatpants that he was pulling up over his thighs. So soft and warm. There I was, sitting like a fucking jerk in my shit-stained boxers freezing my ass off again, probably in some borderline condemnable punk "house". That's when it hit me. Home is where you make it. Take the little creature comforts with you. This will help with combating homesickness and letting the road wear you down, which is not too hard to do. Matt just told me you should also bring a camera. Or, if you're like me, let Matt bring a camera and take all the pictures from him later.

To be continued…

Send bullshit to ldworrell@gmail.com

Part 1: Younger Lovers in New York!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Younger Lovers played New York and we were *shows*, girl. I'll explain: the first night me

and Mateo were *feeling* ourselves, and got blacked out at the Cock. I define the Cock as "SLEAZY-ISH," like you *could* get in a lot of trouble, or you could just get boozy with friends and chill, but *oh no*, me and Matt weren't having that shit. The story as retold to me by a friend who wasn't shitfaced: I got naked on the bar and did an hour-long full-frontal go-go boy show. I remember being on tour with Gravy Train in 2006(?) and this same thing happening. I started shedding tears thinking about my blacked-out *wrinkled* go-go boy pussy on display. Then I remembered, "WAIT! I'm not hurt, I'M USED TO IT!" and my friend said I actually put the other go-go boy to shame and I also remembered the thing that's been my secret advantage for *years*: THERE ARE ADVANTAGES TO BEING CHEAP. I woke up at former *MRR* columnist/alumni Kat Case's; she's currently teaching in New York. I woke her up at 3am, three hours short of her 6am wake-up call (I fucked up and did it the next night too!). Her reasons for hating my guts were very clear and she made it even clearer and *itemized* it! In two parts: 1.) "YOU GODDAMN MUSICIANS!!" and 2.) "HONEY. WE'RE 30 NOW!" I'm 28! (Is 28 the new 30?) Anyway, I did not fuck up again. Mateo came home in the morning. He woke up in Chinatown with no shoes, no shirt, and no jacket!!! I almost cried! *Poor thing*! He got over in like a day and we started practicing.

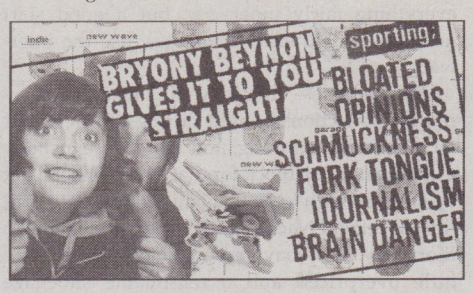
We enlisted Luis Illades to drum and felt stoked. I always loved him in Pansy Division and later the Avengers. Played with Babies and it was good to see Nate. We talked for like four minutes about being on the sauce again. Played with Little Victory, the hot new queer band in New York. I think Younger Lovers and Little Victory are boyfriend bands. Forgetters fucking ROCKED the show at Bruar Falls with us. It was a feel-good thing and I remembered that I've been dancing slutty to Caroline's bands since I was seventeen.

PART 2

So there's this gay thing called *BUTT* magazine, and me and Mateo (my bandmate in Younger Lovers) got invited to the party they were throwing in Chelsea. I hate big crowds, but I remembered that drinking helps with that. I do a Jack and ginger and Mateo gets a Japanese beer and the dude is like "twenty bucks". "*Dude, are you fucking kidding me???? Do I get a fucking blow job with that*?" There's mutual sweat and panic on my and Mateo's brows when we realize that it's gonna cost us 400 fucking dollars to get wasted at this party. We stand in the corner and try to look hot hoping that some rich hooker or trust-funder will come to the rescue, but as is nature in accordance to natural law, people like that already have like twelve boyfriends. No worries, *sisters are doing it for themselves*. We go the corner and take turns in a pee alley chugging 32s and I like it 'cause it reminds me of the teen years I didn't really have. The *second* we were drunk that shit got way funner. I saw Leo Herrera, the *famous* photographer. We had a fling in the '90s and I gave him his official 700th drunken blowjob from me. I love him cause he loves the way I suck dick. This was not a glory time. We went upstairs behind this door that was big enough to block off the hall. He starts grudge-fucking my face with his *retarded* huge dick (for a guy his size no less!) for like seven minutes, then all the beer I drank kicked in. He reaches down and caresses my chin and asks "how you liking it, baby?" I respond with "DUDE, I'M GONNA PUKE" (literally). We broke out laughing. What I didn't get about this party was *where were all the other desperate sex addicts*? We were the only ones upstairs hooking up! I figured there were a lot of limp dicks in the room. At a party with expensive alcohol everyone must be on E or coke or something?

Kim Ann from Hercules and Love Affair debuted her new single and I'm *in love* with her go-go dancer, Shane. Either way I was like "*I'm too punk for this*" when this 6-foot-4 English dude in a fucking Black Flag t-shirt (I use one finger and cover up the "L" and say "NOW IT'S MINE") comes up and we hug instantly for some reason. "Up tha punx!" But wait! Is he punk? Turns out he is, and I found out that he was one of three gay boys who used to hang out at Huggy Bear shows in the UK. "I made out with Jon Slade." *Oh yeah*?!?!?!? I was *definitely* giving him some pussy. We go up to the same spot I was at before to fuck and I pull down my pants and SPREAD 'EM, and this SKETCHY dude who was the *only* sex addict lurking around (besides us) came up and gave us a condom, which seemed weird to me cause he seemed like the type (just generalizing from his sunglasses indoors, black tank top, black back pack *for no good reason*, and general "TWEEKER CHIC") that he wouldn't even know how the SPELL the word "condom". I like risky sex just as much as the next irresponsible asshole but I have to admit this whole "scene" was sorta, well, touching. Mateo, *out of nowhere*, walks up and sees me getting fucked and I was actually kinda bummed. I'm not always into my brother-types watching me get fucked—but then again sometimes I am—depends on the "brother-type" really. Anyway, big ole English dude is banging me out and I'm like, "Awesome." I'm fairly confident I won't give him poop dick because I got fucked by this Puerto Rican daddy in the Bronx earlier and I know there's about a six-to-eight hour window for rinsing out. For some reason I feel insecure, though, and I go to the bathroom and tell him I'll meet him downstairs. I wipe and, HOLY SHIT, I'm clean! Should've let him keep fucking me, and I finally realize being fecal-phobic can sometimes hinder on-the-spot sex—this is nature.

I go downstairs and find English dude and we start making out. Then all of a sudden what I *think* is a sociopath dressed as a Roman soldier turns out to be a sociopath dressed as *King Midas*. Me and English dude get on him and I suck his dick on the dance floor a little, 'cause *someone* needs to kick this shit up a notch. I was into English dude, He was into English dude, and English dude picks me ('cause I'm K-O-O-L) and pretty boy sociopath walks off miffed. QUEENS. Honey Dijon plays the same Bitch-track four-and-a-half times, and it's *really* funny except the part where the queen is like "AND WHAT'S WITH BEARS? WHEN DID IT BECOME ACCEPTABLE TO BE A FAT SLOB???" I was actually and non-ironically really offended. Don't come for fat girls!!!! They're *sexy*!!!!! It's weird how things are so slightly different from coast to coast. I think it's the same, sorta, basically, but there would have N-E-V-E-R been some bitch-track dissing bears in SF, y'know? Fat girls run this town. I get numbers from English dude and me and Mateo leave.



Winter's warm. Winter is warm. Here, at least, November's usual biting cold is missing in action, replaced by sharp fresh sunshine and two layers max. Ah, London's weather—as incongruous as this bizarre jobless lifestyle, one I've found surprisingly sustainable. Hidden in plain sight of all those cut cut cut cuts and our ConDemned democracy, it would nevertheless appear that at city living on state money and borrowed time I am excelling. It might not feel good, but it sure does taste it. This is not to suggest that there aren't projects and logistical challenges (moving backline across the city with no car always top of the list) coming out of my arse as always, but for all my mad skills (right?) there's nothing that fits on that fortnightly form-filling farce that is the dole queue (they don't make you queue) where the boxes are as follows: "what I did / date / what happened / what I will do next / when".

1. At home she's a tourist

Straightjacket Nation were in town for a few days, and I was lucky enough to be doing their only UK gig. They're gone now and I miss them a lot, but we had five days of laughter overload and old streets in new lights, just from explaining things I usually don't think on. New friends from prohibitive time zones asleep in the living room—this is the way I always want to wake. The time I've borrowed from nowhere in particular to tag along I will no doubt pay back when money runs dry, but for now I'm making up schedules to show off the city, rolling around in long and short days filled with just what we fancy, on the cheap always, side order of chips, fanx oh privileged state-funded life of terminal leisure. CC and Danielle were in town from Boston at the same time, and their Sid and Nancy Halloween costumes were the rulingest, no doubt! Their presence, when added to that of SJN frontman slash gangleoid expletive fountain DX, plus Logan's impending arrival on my couch, may make a record for most *MRR* columnists from different continents in one place that isn't the *Maximum* compound at one time. Maybe.

2. Record Schleps

As a result of chaperoning various bands

around the city this month, I got to thinking about putting together a guide of good things to do here. A sort of public service element to the column, if you will. There are definitely people who know way more about this sort of stuff than I, but fuck it, here are some okay places to get your flip on in the city of London. Just so you know, they're listed in the order we would do 'em if we were going from my house. Nothing too comprehensive or holy-grail-inducing, everything fairly inner city, but a good start nonetheless. No exact addresses, use the interweb.

Rat Records – Camberwell: I hear that they put the collections bought during the week out on a Saturday morning, and that there's usually a line around the block for that event. When I get up early enough to do this I might be able to confirm. Weekend Nachos loved this place for cheap Morrissey. They have a punk 7" box which is a little overpriced and a reasonable shoegaze selection if that is your bag.

Music and Video Exchange: There are a few of these across the city. Greenwich, Soho, and Notting Hill are the ones I know of. Notting Hill has the best punk stuff I reckon, racks of battered old 7"s to sift through, and it's not too overpriced. The dudes working in there (all dudes, it seems) have to pass a written test where you have to name every Fall song in order standing on your head whilst humming a Television song backwards, or something not far off that. Recent scores: first two Discharge singles, O.G Rezillos LP with the stamps and the special inner thingy.

All Ages – Camden: London's only DIY punk and hardcore record shop. Stock has vastly improved (from where I'm standing) and broadened in the last few years, so Londoners who usually skip it, take note, you're missing out! (I also got bollocked for not mentioning the shop in the column the last time I went in, and I'll do just about anything for a quiet life.)

Resurrection Records – Camden: Subterranean goth dungeon with heaps of interesting bits and bobs, not just hilarious darkwave. I only recently actually went in here because gauntlets and New Rock boots give me the fear, but I got the No Trend LP (for half my weekly dole money, augh) and that Fury *Resurrection* 7" (Swiz people and that feller from Skull Kontrol) which has one intensely amazing song on it. Ask for the "rare punk box".

Rough Trade – Again, there are two of these, Shoreditch and Portobello. The former doesn't stock used at all, but occasionally has an in-store worth a punt, plus London's most offensive punk impresario Ellis works there. I'd recommend checking out west branch as I believe it's the actual shop premises where the label also began, with a wall of original covers and stuff. Used downstairs is overpriced but worth a look, and you can hang with Fat Bob from Hard Skin!

3. Fossilized punx

A month or so ago we went to a large Mayfair gallery space that I had not heard of before, to check out an exhibition of a private collection of ephemera called "Loud Flash: British Punk on Paper". This collection belongs to erstwhile fashion designer (of sorts) Toby Mott, whose most famous output was the series of slogan t-shirts worn by the likes of Kate Moss for about five minutes in the late nineties, adorned with lines like "I must not chase the boys." Hardly Katherine Hamnett, but either way this guy, like so many other unlikely subjects, was a punk in a former life that went on to make a mint during the New Labour era. The selection of Mott's massive flyer, poster, and fanzine collection on display here was quite impressive to see in the flesh, having only ever pored over PDFs, although originals all were behind glass. Positioned next to the punk stuff was Mott's collection of National Front leaflets, posters, and publications, which provided a chilling, although I suspect unintended, visual parallel. Design of the times, I guess, although this guy's willingness to hold onto all that Xerox hate left me wondering what kind of fan he was.

Standing in this glaringly white space, grubby and shuffling, I'm suddenly aware of that placid but piercing gallery-goer gaze being trained upon me. Me with orange hair and a fake leather jacket and a silly hat. I look down at my clothes. In this hyper historical context, where a contemporary and continued meaning of punk is not only irrelevant but slightly dangerous, as a factor that might lower the value of these objects, I must seem like a curiosity, young enough to be a wasn't-even-born-then reproduction, refracted through a futile present, only able to snap camera phone snaps of everything behind the Perspex. Unlike the posters valued for their dog-eared authenticity, here I'm a bad anachronism, all-too new, a sub-par copy, out of time and out of vogue, or maybe just a fashionable idiot, blasted by the past. I look down at my clothes. In the bookshop I notice the whole collection has been copyrighted "Mott ©" and prints are for sale at hundreds a pop. I wondered how the anonymous artists, forgotten from the outset, probably dead, would feel about that, much less those who are neither (say, Linder Sterling from Ludus, whose art and influence featured large across the collection). Their work decontextualized here to the point where the message of the NF flyers holds no significance. Less than scandalous, objects become objects. I leave a little prouder of the secrets of now-punk, protected by the terminal crusade that, futile or not, is still shadowy enough to resist representation, to remain untamed by gallerists. For now.

Send me your Action Pact, Celia and the Mutations, and Life Cycle (Welsh anarcho) records! Send tapes! 80 Lilford Road, London SE5 9HR UK bryonybeynon@gmail.com

ALL FOREIGN JUNK

Before leaving Australia for a two-month tour of the declining empires of the west, the VELVET UNDERGROUND *Quine Tapes* box set came into my work and I shuffled a copy away to brew in importance until I returned. In San Francisco, the first stop of the UV RACE / TOTAL CONTROL tour, I was happy to hear "What Goes On" and a partial bite from "Sister Ray" (of which there are multiple versions on this compilation), but had to restrain myself to be patient—I had waited 28 years by this point—and let the next month of shows in this crumbling nation serve this role. This was my formula: **UV -> VU -> UV**.

Across the country, in the lofts of New York City, in the airplane towards Iceland with STRAIGHTJACKET NATION, I prepared myself, *trained myself:* constant listening to *VU* and *White Light…* Endless Europe and the scarred highways of Slovakia, and finally the triumphant return, to tear away at the plastic wrapping like a toddler hyperactive with need. It has not disappointed. The entire recorded output of 2010 is going to struggle under the weight of these six (!) LPs of live VELVETs recordings: if you can draw a line back to VU from anyone holding a guitar on a contemporary record, than you are going to have trouble descending back down that line, *unless the line directs itself to THE UV RACE, TOTAL CONTROL, or STRAIGHTJACKET NATION.* If I may be so modest: these were the only bands whose live achievements in 2010 are on par with those that VU displayed here.

Of course… the STRAIGHTJACKET NATION European tour. The subject of this column is Endless Europe: one month spent on the road in Europe with an Australian hardcore band. How easy to distract myself from the *Quine Tapes* when considering the monumental achievements of this band! Nothing else would serve as subject for this column—*Maximumrocknroll* would not open its door to me again were I to continue further discussing the paltry achievements of a dead rock band compared with those of an Australian hardcore band in the present day, battling the customs agents, linguistic incoherence and terrible weather of Endless Europe, Endless!

Cutting to it—could the introduction to this column be any more exhausting? need I make comparisons of my music achievements next to… the SEX PISTOLS?! KRAFTWERK?!—the European tour was a bl'ast. I got back into the country a couple of days ago after nine weeks on the road. In this time, I missed one deadline for this column and surpassed the other by several weeks, having to resort to the literary mendacity of Brace Belden ghostwriting it on my behalf. At this point, I haven't the capability to speak of touring to friends and family: "I liked Poland," I'll usually defer to, "and Slovakia and the Czech Republic. I liked Europe the further East we went." For some reason this was the first response I had to the question, and the one that I have had to repeat subsequently because *I have not had the time to reflect upon it.* And now I have the time…

Nine weeks of touring and two or three days to gather the thoughts into a coherent stream? Impossible. Europe came after an already physically demanding tour of the US with two

bands—drumming for the UV RACE, singing for TOTAL CONTROL—and all of the sleeplessness that comes with cramming eleven people into an eight-seater van for hours at a time, and then let them loose in a country where reckless hedonistic indulgence is *very, very easy*. My memories of the first week in Europe are tarnished by the fact that I spent a great deal of time trying to come to terms with what had happened in the US: by the time that first week had caught up with me, we'd already played Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands… it was sitting in a lewd Swiss mobile home in a small squatted village of motorpunks and crust warriors that I could listen to the copy of *Waterloo Sunset* I'd procured in Denmark and reread chapters from *The Genealogy of Morals*, to slowly let everything catch up to me. For this I am very grateful, both to THE KINKS and to Nietzsche: both shining examples of European culture.

Here's how it started, quickly.

Flew from New York to Reykjavik to London to Berlin. Arrived in the kind of state you'd expect from two days of flying and sitting in airport terminals. Sat down for a meal and a bottle of Italian wine and a coffee in a small bistro run by an ubermensch by name of Roberto. Headed to the Kopi squat to play with BRUTAL KNIGHTS and a band of English punks who crashed the show. Walked to a guy's house around the corner and picked up a copy of the CRO-MAGS demo 10", as I'd correctly assumed that the 12" repress was going to sound like it had been pressed on Parris Mitchell Mayhew's scrotum. I listened to Krishna and resisted the temptation of my earthly desire, and was rewarded with… earthly reward. A note: the demo reveals the band more in debt to BAD BRAINS than you'd expect from *A.O.Q.*, at the daybreak of their shortly lived career as one of the finest inheritors of the early 1980s hardcore.

Here's how it finished, quickly:

A month of shows. A confiscated van. No cancelled shows, no arrests. The worst psychedelic experience of my life in the streets Amsterdam. Hours spent watching the forests turn into fields into congested cobblestone streets into dirt roads along and off the autobahn. Two Polish bands covering "Ready To Fight." Handfuls of immaculate T-REX and KINKS singles, but very few punk records. The last night, leaning back in Roberto's bistro in Berlin celebrating a birthday, recollecting the days past and the scattering of English daze ahead. We flew from Berlin to London, met with Bryony who writes *Modern Hate Vibe* fanzine and books shows in London under the name The Big Takeover, our host for five days. We ate breakfast most every day in a greasy spoon called Rock Steady Eddie's, situated next door to a home for people with mental problems, men-als in English parlance. Chips, peas, beans, mash, hash, tomatoes, cabbage. What a diet. Played a Halloween show with my head wrapped in toilet paper—the Invisible Man, right?—with NO! and MOB RULES, two of the best bands that I'd seen all tour. Double-decker buses and the tube train (never got beat up…). And then… London to Dubai to Singapore to Melbourne.

More on this later—we played a lot of shows. A room full of rowdy Polish punks jumping offa tables while we tore through "(I'm) Stranded" was kinda cool. "No Australian band has ever played this town." An empty room here, and an empty room there. Slovakian gypsy punk and Swiss mutant punk. I'll try to get it down someday—maybe in *Distort*.

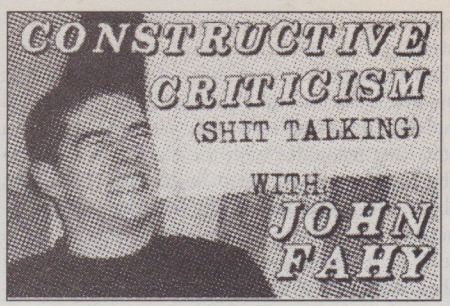
In many respects I felt like we were not heard there. Like most any good punk band "we make music to tell around that we are not like the people who follow the rules of this fucking system." But this fucking system means something different in Italy than Greece than Slovakia than Brazil than Rhodesia than Melbourne. This disparity is not easy to translate across cultural lines unless you live in these places and witness how people live, what they contend with, how they learn discipline and resolve and courage and tragedy… thus what music means to them. Compared with my experience in Australia and the US, punk in Europe is far too politicized for the music to be heard. It is tied into the movements of politics, into social struggles, into bolstering the weakened left wing and the squat movement. Rarely did we play a show where the music seemed like the priority of the experience. This is alien to my experience.

For this reason, the one band that made most sense to me there was SEEIN RED: this is a European hardcore band *par excellence*. Their music was very direct, their presentation very politicized, and it was informed by the current radical struggle in the Netherlands and across Europe. One of the best experiences of watching a band in Europe: people *understood them*, almost intuitively. I did, from so much soaking in social spaces surrounded by voluntary workers: my usual impatience at between-song banter was not evident.

They could not have developed in my country—we are a conservative people, distrusting of European political extremes, our government is not as supportive of squatting and social movements for this very reason—they don't feel threatened by them, perhaps.

There were a few moments where I feel we were understood by the people, and much like the SE Asia tour, the feeling of connection with a people entirely removed from my daily experience over a preference for *loud guitars*, to discuss further preferences in food and in literature and in narcotic and in employment? A night spent across the world listening to "California Uber Alles" with a room full of people hearing entirely different things (a riff, a political statement, a message, a sneer), but all attempting their best Biafra impersonation to the delight of all around them? Fuck, what a privilege!

If you play punk, hardcore, garage noise or any music with a bit of grit and rawness to it, or if you write a fanzine that loosely covers the same sonic territory, and you DON'T live in the US, Japan or Sweden, please get in touch. My address is DANIEL STEWART: PO BOX 239 NORTH CARLTON VICTORIA 3054 AUSTRALIA.



Who Rules Us?

1. There isn't much point in talking about this election specifically. Voters are distracted, fearful people on the whole. The more fearful of this lot can be found to read—and forward—chain e-mails that tell them about the President's supposedly mysterious ethnicity and birthplace, money they're about to inherit from people they've never met that live overseas, curses that will befall them should they not forward to a specified amount of other idiots, all because the written word is gospel to them. Should an anonymous e-mail tell them that Obama is trying to kill the nation's elderly in a sinister, random-Muslim-backed plot, they will believe it, regardless of whether said e-mail is written in multi-colored Comic Sans font or not. Others—the more distracted types—simply enter a polling booth thinking, "I'm not really happy with how things are. I'd better vote for the other guys", thereby endorsing another set of idiots that will continue to make them unhappy for the next few years. And then they will repeat this, election after election. This is why the climate of modern politics is always about voting against something, not for something or someone. We know they're all bastards at the end of the day, we just rail against who we hate especially. You look at your sheet of paper or computer screen and choose the person you think will be less damaging to your life, because we're told that the really scary ones might win this time, not just the scary ones; the really corrupt ones, not the somewhat corrupt. So we get corralled into doing what we're told, supporting a system and a life we hate. We hate the other voters for making us do this, too—they will vote for the really bad bastards, that's why we have to be there playing the game.

So we take the time out to fight off the chain-e-mail-forwarder demographic, the idiots that think they know what's up. The element that is most scary to me is that each election is using more and more money on these fucking ignorant, gullible sheep, especially since the Supreme Court took the gloves off campaign spending altogether this year. Market research works—businesses would not spend endless dollars on finding out what you "like" on Facebook if it didn't. It's not terribly hard to figure out what people want to hear to make them feel fuzzy and safe, and while businesses can donate any amount of money to a politician that will make business run smooth and loose for them, they can also feed the politicians the lines to use on such a gullible, stupid public. They're already busy finding out what you want, or what psychological trigger will make you buy that body

wash, or if your demographic group is demonstrating the newest trends—they can easily use their research to reason what you'd vote for or against also. All any company or campaign needs to do is find a message, a phrase, a line, an idea that resonates with the electorate and beat the public over the head with it until it effects their decision-making. The message might be scary, it might be uplifting—it doesn't matter, as long as it does its job. Ronald Reagan believed that as long as a message was simple and repeated, it would work. That despicable fucking bastard carried 49 states in 1984 and won more electoral votes than any politician in history; who's to say he was wrong? The message: it takes money to figure out what it should be, and the repeating of it; it takes money to advertise it everywhere, over and over again. And the money is pouring in from corporate America to do just that. So the election system now has become just as much about money from the donors—people in business who want no government interference, or worse still, want the government's help in fleecing the public—as it has about voters and their concerns about "issues", and how politicians can placate them without actually solving any real problems. Money trumps people—surprised?

So now, whenever I hear a politician speak publicly, I try to listen to what message they are trying to send to their corporate donors, as well as their moronic constituents. When Boehner says the newly Republican-dominated House of Representatives is going to repeal the health care bill Obama passed, I see that to voters it looks "fiscally conservative" and it's an unpopular issue for Democrats, so therefore fun for Republicans to beat them up with. But it also says to donors that the Republican line is hands off big business, always.

Likewise, when Obama ran for the presidency, I felt like his anti-Iraq, pro-Afghan war stance played well with voters disenchanted with the endless death in Iraq, a country we invaded for no goddamn reason, as well as looking "strong" and "non-liberal" while discussing continuing the fight against "the base for the 9/11 attacks." But what it also says to the massive weapons industry is, "I'm making some changes, but I'm still going to keep you in business."

When people will start really giving a shit about any of this is anyone's guess. I do vote, and I hate it. We rule ourselves—all 300 million of us. Ruled by idiocy, fear, and good old fashioned not-giving-a-shit. So this is what we get, and this is why we're punks.

2. The real fucking question is: who rules the fucking turntable? New records are great, right? But who's hanging around for a while on the tape deck, not being shelved so quickly? Wait, first, let's get nerdy—I have my records and shit, right? On shelves and such (my records face forward, no spine display horseshit). But then I have a little section for the new shit. That's right, just like in a record store. But some records are staying in there longer than others. Like zines—you have that one you really sit back and soak in slowly with, and then others where you read the one interview and couple of reviews you want to see and then jog on. Who rules? Who is hanging around? I'll fucking tell you, because you don't know shit.

POLLUTION's ®*Smut*; this one has been out there a while now, and staying strong in the rotation. The difference in sound on this LP is notable compared to their others; the guitar is cleaned up enough to hear more of the chaotic, odd material on hand, but this entire recording still makes the band sound like an oddball gem from 1989 you can't believe you stumbled upon. Everything about this is excellent. A catchy, dark, disturbing, raging record. Who can compare to POLLUTION? The ambiguity in the art and lyrics are not too pronounced, yet not pandering in the slightest. These guys have been around long enough to know what to do, when to do it and for how long. If the abrupt, crushing, hypnotic first track doesn't ensnare you, your needle is dipping in the wrong fucking wax, shithead.

SHOPPERS' second tape packs a little more material than their first, and I believe this will be pressed as 7" EP at some point. The music here is clean and bright but still somehow an awful mess that thrashes onward to a damaged pop beat. Meredith's vocals have a lot of personality (resigned, patient, indignant, wise, and bitter are all vibes that come off strong at various points) and she can exert a lot of subtle emotion and melody over some driving, feedback-laden, noise-punk tunes that feel uplifting through all of their messy trappings. This sounds like that exactly; a big mess that doesn't give a shit and forges on in spite of its ugliness, and wins out with memorable, catchy punk songwriting. I saw these kids play in Fort Myers and I could not stop my head and feet from shaking throughout their set, during which Meredith destroyed four strings in one song. Both of this band's tapes have been rotating in and out of the tape deck for some time now…

Surprise, MERCHANDISE are still ruling the fuck out of the turntable. Such a left-field record was always going to need some more puzzling over, and beyond that, this is just great. How many shitty post-punk or shoegaze records do you have that almost deliver? This is a different animal. This snake charms. Carson's vocals come out of nowhere on each song—it seems like he's already been singing but you just started paying attention. The last track, "In The Dark," is as good as any post-punk song out there. Where the rest of the album can be more upbeat, the ending is just pure saturation of dramatic, bleak, mechanical post-punk. The stops were pulled out on this record: multiple noisy synth tracks, guitars, drums, drum machines, vocals upon vocals, all working to the record's favor and not sounding like it's trying too hard. "I Locked The Door", the second track, has been lodged into my head for weeks, thanks to its brilliant vocal melody. This record simply should be gotten by people who like good fucking music. The band is already onto other matters, so keep your eyes peeled.

ESCALATOR, from Connecticut, released a killer first tape and since then have dropped the bass and recorded their next, *Performance Anxiety*. This record has some really odd, catchy parts, blasting towards rage and then abruptly leaning into an offbeat subtle part, only to return to fury seconds later. Lyrics are heavy, delivered solidly, and bellowed with total disgust. I hope to see this band very soon and I'm hoping they will have some more of this material on hand when I do. I can't think of a single comparison to this demo, other than I can see it being in the Bovine Records lineage somehow, furious and strange. The closing is a perfect one—a mean, bratty, defiant version of FAILURE FACE's "Pure Entertainment". We Rise Records and the band put together some cool packaging for this tape so pick them up while they last.

YEUNG is the new project from Chris of BUREAUCRATIC DYSSENTERY and Sacred Tapes, continuing what B.D. started. The recording here is messy, but the nine songs (plus an ENEMY SOIL cover!) explode out of the speakers and pummel all nearby. My personal favorite is the catchy blaster "Walking Rot." Other titles include "Trash," "Incendiary," "Pig Fucks," "Yuppie Scum," and the title track, "You Will Never Know." You can probably tell what you're getting here, musically and lyrically, is utter disgust and hate. Chris's packaging is always flawless, so these are no exception. His tape labels state "Intended For Maximum Volume" and that's good advice for this cassette. Drum-machine-supported, grinding annihilation is what you get, without any clean metal touches—strictly grime and dissatisfaction. Since Chris's appearance with CLOUD RAT and XTRA VOMIT (this show was an utter bludgeon-fest) in Fort Myers this past October, this has stayed loitering around the tape deck.

Finally, HORRID CROSS's third demo tape is excellent, even if the sound quality has dipped from their two previous releases. This is a relentless attack from start to finish, with the B-side raging into oblivion. HORRID CROSS bring together swirling noise, relentless grinding thrash, and the feeling of completely inescapable doom. While you're ordering this, you may as well get Evan's *Irradiated Corpse* zine. This is the one zine that's hung around the bathroom longer than others as of late. Evan has a very militant, eccentric, black and white, chastising tone to his writing that makes for the perfect zine personality. His way of writing out his hate and mockery is excellent. His reviews go deep to the vibe aspect of a record, rather than sound. The interviewees are asked pointed, opinionated questions, and the diatribes are relentless and often dead right. Evan likes his metal, obviously, so that's heavily displayed here with bands interviewed and records reviewed. He also likes to court controversy and take stands on controversial issues, so it's never boring reading. Hopefully he keeps this up, he's doing a damn good job with it. Interviewees include IGNIVOMOUS, DURAZIS, and POLLUTION.

Until next time, drop me a line and let me know who's ruling your tape deck/turntable/boombox/iPad/phone/beeper: fahy_john@hotmail.com

ENDNOTES:

1.Paypal the above address five clams for a copy

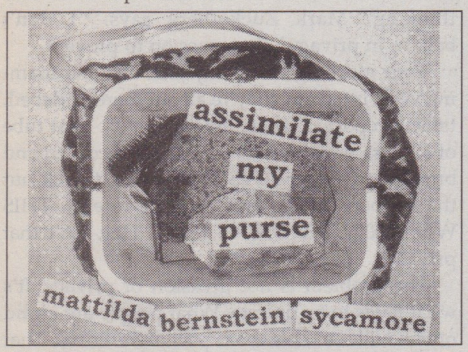
of the PANZRAM tape *Restraint*, should you want one.

2. Demos I've been getting have been excellent! The more noisy of you, please send on: John Fahy / 15011 Lakeside View Drive / Apt. 2402 / Fort Myers, FL 33919 / USA. Thanks.

3. I forgot to mention, the CLOUD RAT LP is still kicking around the turntable. Keep an eye out for an interview with them shortly!

Other than that, still some PSYCHEDELIC FURS LPs, EASTER MONKEYS, and PIL shit... but you don't care about this. Maybe you'll care that IFB Records has also released two XTRA VOMIT splits and they remind me of some kind of fucking Michiganer KYKLOOPIEN? Raging fucking hardcore punk that decimates, pauses, and restarts abruptly like a faulty chainsaw.

4. SHOPPERS and MERCHANDISE are here: www.druggedconscience.com. YEUNG is here: deathsquadmarch.webs.com. HORRID CROSS / Irradiated Corpse zine are here: irradiatedcorpse@hotmail.com. POLLUTION are here: pollution.c6@gmail.com. ESCALATOR are here: werise.wordpress.com.



The Ruins

Just thinking about it

Exhaustion can be so exhausting. Really: what could be more exhausting? I'm exhausted just looking at the word: exhaustion. Wait—I was exhausted before, but then I got even more exhausted thinking about it. Did you hear that? Even thinking about exhaustion is exhausting.

Outside. Yes, outside. This is outside: allergies and exhaustion. Should I walk one more block? Too exhausting. I'll turn around. Even the view, nothing seems pretty about the view today, my eyes hurt. It's tiring to look that far, my vision is blurry, do I need new contacts, I already got new contacts, they hurt my eyes. There's that annoying person who I used to think was hot until he started scowling at me, I'm not even going to look in his direction, just to show him how much I don't care, or maybe I'll look at him at the very last moment, oh there he is staring at me, or maybe he's staring at my hat. I hate walks like this that just make me feel worse, and then I get back to my apartment for more exhaustion. Why is it sunny again? It hurts my eyes. Just thinking about it is exhausting. I already told you that. You're still thinking about it. So am I. I'm sick of thinking about it. I can't think about anything else right now. It just makes me exhausted.

Then there's my body down here

So many birds chirping today, where are all these birds? I'm out on the fire escape in the soft sun, the sun that happens after rain, the best kind of sun because you know what it means. I'm listening to these birds, chirping like spring but it's fall and I love this time of year, although where are all these birds? I think these are the type that hang out at the top of a tree with lush foliage, maybe a—wait, I forgot what those trees are called, the trees from Kelvline's childhood so she's the one who told me the name—but anyway there are all these tiny birds and you can hear them but no matter how much you look you can't find them in the tree, or maybe you can find them but I can't, a tree downtown where there are very few, like here, and that makes these birds even better.

A crow lands at the top of the fire escape on the roof of the building next door, a beautiful black crow—are crows always black? Maybe it's redundant to say a black crow, but I love birds, that's what I'm thinking. Going back into my apartment I think wow, I actually feel pretty good today, and then I call Randy on the phone and it's right in the first word I start to say, somewhere in the middle of that word where I realize oh no, I'm exhausted. It's not about that word, just about speaking and when you start at the beginning of the day I mean when I start and then suddenly I realize oh, all that energy was in my head, where it usually is, but then there's my body down here and the way the sinus headache sinks in but still I'll think about these chirping birds, the black crow, even if it's redundant, I'll think about whether there are enough cloudy days in Santa Fe, cloudy days to make the sun mean what I want it to mean and not just something beating down, help, I'm pretty sure I'll like the winter, I love snow, but first I'll go on a walk, here in San Francisco, I'll go on a walk in the sun and I'll hope that this headache doesn't get worse.

The ruins

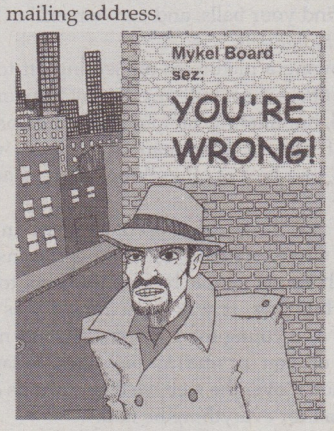
The air is incredible today—cool and fresh and as soon as I get on the fire escape my head clears, wow I love this. The birds I can't see are chirping again, even more this time and it gives me that childlike excitement that I love and then for some reason the seagulls start squawking and flying in a circle, more and more and if there's something I will miss about San Francisco it's this view, the light on the buildings and all these decaying rooftops, hills and mountains and highway in the distance and so much calm.

Or maybe I won't miss this view, it'll just be different. Very different. I guess that's what I'm looking for. Yesterday I was looking through old photos, and I found a roll from this public art-making party I threw in the ruins of the demolished laundromat next door to my old apartment, all these big wheatpastes I did on the walls like the one of me sucking cock that says IT'S ALL ABOUT GLAMOUR and I remember being disappointed that more people didn't show up, but here in the pictures it looks amazing, we're wandering around in the ruins, creating our own ruins and looking at these pictures reminded me of how I felt when I moved back to San Francisco and it just felt like there were so many more options for flamboyance and excitement and public engagement and queer dreams and now I don't feel that at all.

Of course then I was fleeing New York and the clampdown of consumer culture and career on everything, here it was going in the same direction but ten years behind, so much more felt possible and maybe part of that was just that I got away. But also what San Francisco meant to me and it doesn't mean that anymore. Maybe it'll mean that again, but I can hardly imagine feeling that excitement here now. I'm not sure how much of this is just that I'm so weighed down by exhaustion that those moments of energy just feel like mania that will fade momentarily, and how much is that I'm weighed down by San Francisco and the failure of pretty much everything I wanted here. I know that when I leave something clears, but now I'm not just leaving to go on a book tour, I'm leaving. I'm ready, and I'm not ready. I'm ready. Maybe not when the air feels so clear and I can listen to the birds, but I know I'll be able to do that in Santa Fe. And hopefully I'll be able to dream more too.

*****

My most recent book is a novel, *So Many Ways to Sleep Badly*. I'm also finishing on a memoirish thing called *The End of San Francisco*—I'm on draft number nine which means it's almost done!. I recently finished a new anthology called *Why Are Faggots So Afraid of Faggots?* I know you're wondering the same thing. Now I'm just waiting for someone to publish it. By the time you read this, I'll be living in Santa Fe—I know, it sounds as crazy to me as it does to you. You can communicate with me via www.mattildabernsteinsycamore.com, which includes past *MRR* columns, although I need to add the most recent ones. Or you can write to me at 537 Jones Street, #3152, San Francisco, CA 94102, until I get a new mailing address.



"However great a man's fear of life, suicide remains the courageous act, the clear-headed act of a mathematician."

– Graham Greene

"Psychiatrists claim, and most people now believe, that mental illness causes addiction, crime, suicide, and countless other acts we abhor and fear. Therein lies the virtual limitless power of mental illness and psychiatry to undermine the idea of responsibility and subvert justice.

– Thomas Szasz

"Suicide is the most sincere form of self-criticism."

– Robert Heinlein

I wipe the semen off my hands. Fuck! I don't spurt like I used to. Just a little dribble down that V in the back. The build up is as good as ever, but the climax is no better than a decent fart.

Ah well. I'm glad they've got free samples of those clips from *Broke Straight Boys* on Gaytube. I like 'em, but I sure as dripping cum don't want to pay for 'em!

After wiping up, I hit Facebook. Someone's posted a video of Ellen Degeneres. In the video, she talks about some college kid who jumped off a bridge. Someone interneted a spycam video of him giving a blowjob. It was just too humiliating to live.

Among other things, Ellen says, "There are messages everywhere that validate this kind of bullying and taunting, and we have to make it stop. We can't let intolerance and ignorance take another kid's life."

My first reaction is: *Uh oh! They're gonna used this as an excuse for internet censorship. There goes spycam.com!*

"You see what freedom does?" they'll say. "It kills people! We need laws to stop this kind of thing."

Then, somehow, they'll twist it so laws against posting cam pictures promote *freedom.* It's illogical. But I bet they do it. And what about the kids who set up the spycam? As of now, they're charging them with invasion of privacy… *as a hate crime.*

The more I think about it, the more it pisses me off. I've written before about the dangers of *bullying* and *hate crimes* laws. I'll get to hate crimes later. But even before that… is this bullying?

Joe Jockstrap walks up to Wimpy Pudge, pokes him in the stomach. "Hey fatso," he says, "gimme your lunch money or I'll lift up your belly, find your balls, and cut 'em off."

That's bullying.

Showing a picture of me jerking off to *Broke Straight Boys* is *not* bullying. It may be poor taste, uncivil, humiliating, tabloid journalism, an invasion of privacy, blackmail (if it comes with a threat), or a host of other things. But it's not bullying.

My pal Tony, who used to write in these pages, wrote on Facebook: "I think the answer is to teach young people by example how to stand up to bullying. It was something I was never taught as a young man. If some bastard made a video of you or me at our ages today and streamed it over the web we'd get furious & SUE the freak for everything he had.

"It's the fact that the kid was humiliated that caused him to make a death leap. The only shield against a weapon of homophobic humiliation is to teach the kid how to refuse to permit himself to be humiliated. It's not enough to just be out of the closet if a gay kid still thinks his sexuality is somehow more humiliating than that of a straight boy. If a straight boy had something like that happen to him, he'd just get pissed off at the 'prank' and fight back. You have to open the eyes of a gay kid and tell him to stand up for himself because he's no different than any straight boy. You say: 'Hey, do you know any straight boys who'd kill themselves over that?'

"Nothing makes a gay boy any less equal to a straight boy."

I like Tony's answer, but disagree with part of it.

First, if a straight guy sees videos of himself screwing on the internet, he does not sue. He brags.

Second, there are several things that make a gay boy *less equal to a straight boy.*

Take hate crimes laws. (Please!) I've written before about how these thought-crime bills are bad for civil liberties and worse as public policy. I could go on, but that's not why I'm writing this column. Besides, Alexander Cockburn said everything I had to say on that. You can read it at: http://tinyurl.com/cockburnhate

There is another aspect to the hate-crime bills, though. They create an *us* and a *them.* A protected group (them) and everybody else (us). As long as there are laws singling out special groups… As long as victims are defined as Negroes, Hispanics, Jews, or a myriad of others… When you disallow hate on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, nationality, but allow it for clothes or eye color, you *create* inequality.

If I punch you because you're a Republican, I spend thirty days in jail. If I do it because you're a homo, I spend five years. That means homos are *not equal* to Republicans. And it's the law that creates that inequality.

Then, there's the question of suicide itself. If you kill yourself, who's the murderer? Imagine this:

Radley Smirton is a comedian. His shtick is SUPERNERD, like Pee Wee Herman, but less creepy. He makes fun of jocks, meatheads, blonde airhead girls.

"So this football coach walks into the locker room before the game. He talks to Joe Dirt, star running back.

"'I'm not supposed to let you play since you failed math, but we need you in there. So if I ask you a math question and you get it right, you can play.'"

"Joe frowns.

"'Okay,' says the coach, 'now concentrate… what is two plus two?'

"Joe thinks for a moment and answers, 'Four?'

"At that, all the other players on the team began screaming, 'Come on coach, give him another chance!'"

Smirton takes a bow on Leno, walks over to him, pretends to give the high five… and misses. The audience is in stitches. This guy is headed for the stars… or at least Vegas.

Then it happens. Someone bugs his apartment. Sets up a spycam. Before long, there it is on the internet. Ridley Smirton, sitting in an armchair, bowl of popcorn by his side, feet up, *watching the Superbowl!*

In a few minutes, it's everywhere. Smirton's career drops from Superbowl to toilet bowl. Instead of laughing with him, his former fans are laughing at him. Anti-jock nerdboy! Yeah, right.

Unable to stand the humiliation, Smirton buys a ticket to a New York Knicks game at Madison Square Garden. At the end of the game, he hides among the vendors' carts. Then, when the Garden is empty, he hangs himself from one of the baskets.

The press is outraged! His death is a hate crime! The result of bullying. There's gotta be a law. Someone has to pay for this. Ellen Degeneres makes a video. Yeah, right.

Suicide may be sad. It may even be a crime. But unless you're hypnotized or drugged, if *you* commit suicide, *you* commit the crime. If it's a hate crime… it's a *self-hate* crime.

I feel sorrier for the poor guys who set up the cam. In the case of the homo bridge-jumper, it was a pair of non-American-born non-whites: an Indian guy and a Chinese girl. Easy targets. I bet they feel worse about the death than any of the critics calling for their blood. And unlike the bridge-jumper, they have to live with it.

Wake up, buckaroos. This is 2010. You EXPECT a camera behind every dorm room mirror. Your sexting photo today is gonna be on Facebook tomorrow. In England, 20% of all divorce cases involve Facebook. What were they thinking? Mark Zuckerberg says, "I don't believe in privacy," then goes on to prove it.

Your morning wood, my jock itch, her foaming yeast infection, they're all out there. Videoed, tallied, reported. There are no secrets. That tube of KY you bought at CVS has been recorded and broadcast to every CVS in America. Check out the coupons at the end of your receipt. THIS WEEK 20% OFF ON KY JELLY. Hey, isn't that private?

The problem is not invasion of privacy. It's what *needs* to be private. What people are afraid others will see. That too is part of the crime. That kid who jumped from the bridge because he was videoed sucking cock. That he felt he had to jump is a crime, and America is the perpetrator.

[Aside: a former governor of New Jersey was caught in a similar video. He resigned, but has since become active in homo rights groups. See? You don't *have* to kill yourself. There, Tony's right.]

Ah, what's the use? Americans are vengeful people. If somebody dies, somebody's got to pay. The victim and the society can't pay, so we'll find someone else. Hate is bad, so we'll put it in jail. That poor Indian guy is gonna go get raped by a bunch of thugs in a little cell somewhere. That'll teach him to love homos. Right? No more hate coming from him, right? It's sick.

I'm finished now; I think I'll go back to spycam.com. Maybe the next orgasm will be better than the last.

ENDNOTES: [email subscribers (god@mykelboard.com) or website viewers (www.mykelboard.com) will get live links and a chance to email comment on the column]

—>*Speaking of unequal* dept.: Chuck Shepherd reports that until August 2010 Nettleton Middle School in Mississippi had a strict policy for election of class officers for 6th, 7th and 8th graders: only white students could be president; only black students could be vice president.

Officials explained that it was the only way to insure black representation. Three-fourths of the

students are white. A school memo was leaked to *The Smoking Gun* website in August. A day later, the school district rescinded the policy.

—>*And on the bullying front*: *The Smoking Gun* also reports that with school bullying and harassment now the subject of a growing national controversy, the rapper Eminem has his own bully story.

As an elementary school student in Detroit, young Marshall Mathers was the target of bullying so severe that his mother sued the local school board for failing to protect her child.

In her 1982 Circuit Court complaint, Deborah Mathers alleged that her nine-year-old child endured repeated assaults while enrolled at Dort Elementary School. Her son, she reported, was beaten so severely that he suffered a cerebral concussion, post-traumatic headaches, intermittent loss of vision and hearing, and other injuries to his head, face, back, and neck.

The lawsuit, which asked for more than $10,000 in damages, was eventually dismissed on the grounds of governmental immunity.

—>*And what's replaced it?* Dept.: In an interview with a British newspaper, the singer Prince says that "the Internet is completely over."

I dunno. I must be jerking off to all those sites on *the medium formerly known as the Internet*.

—>*International conspiracy* Dept.: Ever wonder how China and Syria get the technology to censor all those pro-Democratic Internet sites? They buy it from the U.S.

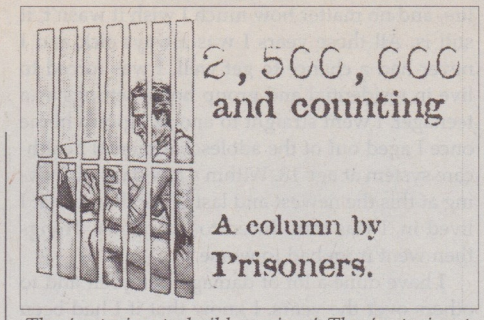
Two particularly noxious programs, SmartFilter and Websense, are marketed to parents in the U.S. They're supposed to keep junior from learning there's more he can do with his floppy than piss out of it. But as bad as that it, those programs do worse.

Governments even more repressive than our own use these programs to block access to unapproved pro-Democracy sites. Check out opennet.net for the scary details.

—>*On the other side* Dept.: Walid Al-Saqaf, former editor of the *Yemen Times*, has developed Alkasir (alkasir.com). This program resides on a USB flash drive and lets a browser circumvent the censorware. Download it and give it to your friends in China… or to the kids at the elementary school down the block.

—>*My kind of politician* Dept.: Florida Congressman Alan Grayson has complained that "next year's budget allocates $159,000,000,000 to perpetuate the occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq. That's enough to eliminate federal income taxes for the first $35,000 of every American's income." He's introduced a bill to stop those wars and cut those taxes. You can join him at: TheWarIsMakingYouPoor.com

—>I'm writing this just before my Mexican trip. No right-as-it-happens blog on that one. No computer. If I die in Tijuana, you'll probably read about it here. I dunno, I've always admired Ted Rall for his war reporting. I guess I'll be doing the same thing. (Or maybe the danger is just the press exaggerations. Maybe I'll even get laid.)



They're trying to build a prison! They're trying to build a prison! They're trying to build a prison!! For you and me!

Year three of my incarceration…eating beef in a pigpen! Lame sauce!

Let's see…where to begin, I believe all started with a bribe from my ex-mother-in-law or Dana the Hun as I've aptly dubbed her. "Get baptized LDS and we'll build you a house" [Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints]. Well, I'm doing the family thing so a house sounds pretty peachy, besides I am hella behind on rent, gotta keep the methadone clinic paid…can't function without the peach punch! However, I am not vibing too well with the LDS tip, organized religion and whatnot. But I am in love with their son (who is a closet transvestite and, that my friends, is more fun than a barrel of monkeys!!) and more importantly we have a beautiful cherubic little daughter who is our whole world! So I think this; meet with their missionaries. But alas, no matter how much lemon zinger tea (caffeine free, of course) I dump down their pieholes, I cannot get them to produce a single convincing reason why I should sell my soul for a house, which is how I think of it. Let me give you an example of our discussions:

Me: Why do you excommunicate your members for smoking tobacco, yet have stock in tobacco companies? (Phillip Morris and I were just curious.)

Them: uh….

Me: Why is it that you barely let black people join the church during the '70s? Civil rights? NAACP? That's a convenient time for a vision, yes?

Them: uh….

Me: What's good with your Masonic temples? Masons? Secret societies? Cults?

Them: Blah, blah, Joseph Smith.

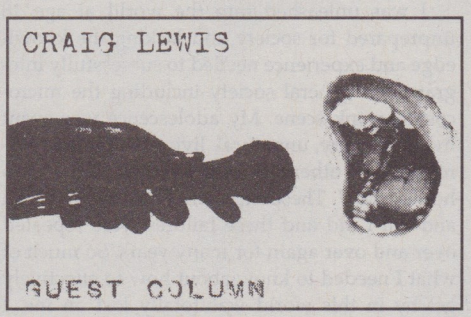
Needless to say I refused their baptismal "offer" for myself, and my seed alike! Well, Mark's parents hated me ever since! Mark (damn, he looked prime in those fishnets) and I broke up, much to my devastation and relief. Anyway, one day I let him take our daughter up to Adolf and Eva's bunker…oh I mean his parent's crib, and they decide that they have temporary custody. Well, I've never signed anything, so I place a call to their lawyer, which he does not return and go swoop up my daughter, who is eager to bounce. Then BAM? There's an Amber Alert and I am charged with a fifteen to life aggravated kidnapping and a five to life aggravated burglary. Plus, three other lesser charges. I take a plea bargain because, hey, fifteen to life is no joke. Me, a single woman, a felon, a minority (half Indian and half Irish), an anarchist, verses the head of relief society and a high priest of the Mormon church? So hear I sit in the Hooskow. I go back to the parole board in three years. My daughter will be 11. She was five at the time. They have this program here that is the biggest bureaucratic house imaginable!

The system is like a shepherd, and us the flock. We get three things from one another. From us they get wool, meat, and occasionally sex. From them we get sheared, butchered, and generally screwed.

Old anarchist joke.

Please feel free to write me,

Julia Wheelwright #135746
c/o U.S.P. P.O. Box 250
Draper, UT 84020



On April 13th 1988 I was delivered to the now bankrupt and defunct Charles River Hospital, a mental health facility. I was a naïve 14 year old from a shit town 25 minutes outside of Boston. I was sick with mental illness and the painful life I was living was about to quickly and progressively get worse. I hit bottom countless times over the years and with each episode I became sicker and sicker and my quality of life became worse and worse. In 2004 I lost the will to live, to even try to stay alive. This was when I, as an adult, finally began to address my mental health issues.

A common sentiment is that the punk scene is a safe haven for the mentally ill, the drug addicts, the alcoholics, the dysfunctional, the freaks and so many others like me; those who are on the fringes of society. In my experience, the punk scene allows someone like me, someone who for many, many years was so incredibly sick; continue to be sick without setting off enough warning signs that I needed serious help. At the same time it is unlikely that during those years, without being committed, that I would go seek out and get the help I needed. My reality is that after years of being institutionalized against my will, I developed an extreme distrust of the system and I rejected it.

In my experience, the punk scene frowned upon taking medication. Even dear friends in well-known bands spoke out against the taking of psychiatric medication. This anti-medication pressure and non-acceptance was a powerfully negative force in my life. Curiously, most people will take medication for having a cold, the flu, diabetes, high blood pressure, for pain, a headache, cancer, HIV, acid reflux or they will have a broken bone set and put in a cast or take antibiotics for any countless number of conditions.

In order for me to cope with my illness and the poor quality of my life I started smoking weed. I got high everyday and I would do anything to make this happen. They say that smoking pot is not addictive however for me it was the only thing that kept me under wraps and I had to do it. I was self-medicating and I did this for ten years.

The punk scene allowed me to be sick. No one helped me find my way toward getting well. I had numerous friends who worked in human services yet I don't recall being steered toward obtaining services. If they did it wasn't enough because as a child of the system, living in misery would be 100 times better than losing my physical freedom. Looking back I must ask why weren't my punk friends helping me get well.

I was unleashed into the world at age 18 unprepared for society and lacking the knowledge and experience needed to successfully integrate into general society including the microcosmic punk scene. My adolescence was spent living in very unnatural living situations surrounded by other uprooted teenagers and group home "staff". These experiences set me up to fail and fail I did and these failures were repeated over and over again for many years. So much of what I needed to know about how to effectively get by in this world was totally lost on me. I never had a chance.

The punk scene makes excuses for people to do fucked up shit. The punk scene gives a free pass for one to be wild, crazy and destructive. I have to ask myself how many times did I hurt someone else when I was not well? I think the answer to that question is a lot. It is also equally relevant, necessary and important to acknowledge that there are those who took advantage of my being ill. I've had lots of "punk" friends over the years, some of whom have done some pretty sketchy stuff. Over the course of the life of a person with a mental illness we come across a lot of people who are very good at sinking their teeth into us without leaving bite marks. One frightening reality is that there are people out there who will do and say anything and hurt anyone to achieve their goals; this has been my experience.

In the punk scene acting crazy and wild are accepted behaviors. People freaking out and being wild was and is par for the course punk rocker behavior. In my situation, I had a real serious problem and anyone reading this that knows me, regardless of what you may think of me, legitimate or not, knows that I was not well. The punk scene and my punk friends did nothing (or very little) to help me get better. One crucial point that must be stated is that no one should ever think for even one second that I liked or wanted to be acting the way that I often did. My unfortunate behavior was an expression of my inner pain and suffering and the sickness and chaos that I experienced personally only brought more and more pain and suffering to my life and only made me sicker and sicker.

I had no way to make things better. Every time I acted poorly I only made things worse. The friends I've lost over the years due to my instability are many. Mental illness is a lonely life, and no matter how much I wish it wasn't, it still is. All those years I was always sick and I never had a chance to get well. I was forced to live in residential and group home settings as a teenager. I went straight to another group home once I aged out of the adolescent mental health-care system at age 18. Within a few days of arriving at this the newest and last group home that I lived in, I was introduced to marijuana. Things then went from bad to worse.

I have done a lot of damage to myself and to others over the years. I know that if I had been receiving effective treatment all those years that things would not have been as bad for me and for those around me

The reality is that recovery from mental illness is not only possible, it is probable. Indubitably, my 22 years life experience of being part of the punk scene has informed my thinking about life in general, mental illness and how to live a better life now that I am well. I am experiencing what is called "recovery". The National Consensus Statement on Mental Health Recovery defines recovery as "a journey of healing and transformation enabling a person with a mental health problem to live a meaningful life in a community of his or her choice while striving to achieve his or her full potential." I am living this reality and I am grateful for my disease, my recovery and for my opportunity to live a more meaningful and purposeful life.

I have written this column because I want to see my people rise up and live a happier, healthier and better quality life. When I say my people I am talking about those of us who live with the symptoms of mental illness. After a lifetime of sickness, I am well. However this seems to be difficult for a lot of people who know me to believe and accept as truth. I changed my life for the better and I am as far as I am concerned a beautiful success story. I am going to share with you about my recovery and what I did to get well. There are countless punk rockers, and people in general in our world, who are unhappy and struggling, who are self-medicating to deal with their pain and hurt, people who are on the fringe of society just like I always have been and likely always will be. That is a reality of life however I bring a message that things can improve for people who struggle with the symptoms of mental illness. Why must we continue to dull our emotions through substance abuse when we might benefit so much more from appropriate psychiatric intervention and/or peer support? Why must our friends and families living with mental illness turn to suicide? Why does the punk scene, a place of purported acceptance place a person such as me into the slim and restrictive category of being "crazy?" Why do we enforce stigma over offering love and acceptance? I can tell you that there is so more to me than a mental health diagnosis. I suppose it is easier for most people to classify me and put me in a box than to acknowledge that I have changed for the better. I am well, damnit, so please embrace me and let's move forward.

In 2004 I hit rock bottom and was seriously in need of major psychiatric intervention. In the fall of that year I was arrested twice and I was not well either time and the cops were exceptionally cruel to me as would be expected. This experience was incredibly traumatizing for me. I also lived in a house with some really terrible people which was triggering me and causing me to have symptoms. I then moved to a different part of Boston. I was still in desperate need of psychiatric help as my then current doctor was not meeting my needs. I needed a therapist so I looked in the yellow pages and three weeks later I began meeting with a wonderful social worker whom I meet with weekly and have done so for five years. I fired my psychiatrist and sought out a more attentive doctor. I then accessed vocational services at the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission. I began attending a special and now defunct school that taught individuals with mental illness to work as counselors. I graduated from this school and did a 3 month internship at a local rehabilitation center. I also passed the Certified Peer Specialist Exam and was honored at the State House for it. I worked for one year at a recovery community as a peer counselor. I was laid off so I began attending college. In 33 credits I have a 3.856 GPA, not too shabby I must say. I played in a band and all the songs I sang were about my recovery. I finally got a great apartment that I can afford and I love it. I go to community acupuncture at least 2 times per month and it helps! I go to the gym which is wonderful for my mind. I watercolor. I spend time with my nieces and nephew. I have a great new job working as a Peer Specialist. I volunteer facilitating a weekly recovery group that is highly successful and I am compiling a book of the curriculum that I have created for this group. I have put out a fanzine. I have made and nurtured friendships and relationships. I seek out and offer peer support to people in the mental health community and with friends in the punk scene.

I accept the scorn of others as it is pure gold in my fuel tank and whether anyone loves me or hates me it matters not as my recovery is stronger and more powerful than anyone has any idea including me. I AM in recovery! I love life. I have changed my life and how I manage my symptoms for the better. I am surviving yet I am doing something even better than simply surviving, I am thriving and kicking ass in general. The world is my oyster and whether or not I have a mental illness and whether or not people accept me and treat me with dignity, I am happy and content and my life is beautiful and that's that.

My name is Craig. Please email me at lewisgrey@gmail.com .Thank you *MRR*. Victory is mine.

I agree with Marissa Magic's guest column in *MRR* #331. Punk is no longer a threat to mainstream society. Hell, it may have never been a relevant political statement? We could debate whether rock music has ever been a valid political forum. It seems to me that punk no longer embodies its original spirit which I think first and foremost was angst and rebellion against the unjust world. Corporate interests have subverted every subculture this world has produced that I am aware of by now anyhow. Naomi Klein wrote a book some ten odd years ago about this phenomenon called *No Logo* which I'm sure most of you are aware of at this point. I think we can learn a great deal from her research and insight about the implications in the branding of culture. Many of us have conformed to the mainstream society, ironically giving in, knowingly using the system because we are a scene of first world privilege. For others it has been a gradual backslide, little by little we settle into a more comfortable lifestyle of conformity. Whenever I feel like I'm starting to slip I try asking myself a series of questions that will help me to regain my direction.

Where has the post modernist punk ideal of fatalism and futilism left our current scene? When I think about the state of the current punk scene I see a hollow facade of what was once idealism and radical thought. It feels like there is a rule book which everyone has read and no one has a actual honest opinion of their own. What can we do to create something- more authentic but still with the original spirit of counter culture? What can I do in my life to change what I see as a hollow existence of consumerism and self deprecation?

The way I see it punk rock has become just another consumerist culture of "cool". Whether we are talking about who is mimicking the best retro punk/hardcore/garage band of 25 years ago, to who is looking fashionable in their studs, spikes, and all black leather clad road warrior garb. Of course I'm not leaving out those trendy hipster post punk uniformists. Where is the non conformist lifestyle, the direct opposition to societies dictates? Why have we not protected our scene from the possibilities of selling out? It seems that the artistic nature of our culture has been strip mined for every other subculture the world over. Taking all the danger out of being a punk.

There is a new trend every other day and it can be adopted instantaneously. Gone are the times when kids would sew, paint, and piece together their own unique outfit. Lets face it in the '00s time is racing ahead of what a normal teenager 20 years ago could possibly imagine. Who has time to be an individual when we can all order our punk gear from hottopic.com? It comes down to the fact that this instant gratification is hollow. I can read an article on my iphone at lunch about an obscure artist and by 5pm 2 million other people have read the same thing. There is nothing obscure anymore that one would actually have to dig to find it seems. Without struggle there is emptiness. There is nothing to talk about anymore, and the lack of dialog has become a huge brain drain on our scene.

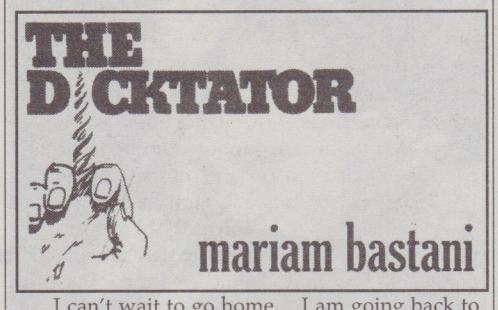
Can you remember the last time a punk that was in a popular band talked to you about foreign policies? When was the last time a popular band wrote something that was halfway politically aware and current? Has a popular punk ever even talked with you? Oh shit, no, you're not cool enough. That band shirt your wearing is so 3 years ago. I miss critical thinkers like Sam Mcpheeters, or even more current interesting figures like Damian Abraham aka Pink Eyes. Where have they gone? To write for Vice Magazine, or record records for Vice/Matador Records. Why you ask? Maybe because the creative freedom of the original movement has been stifled. Maybe the people who are left just want to be spoon fed retro garbage for the rest of their lives? I know I don't. I want to open my mind to new sounds and new thoughts.

Sometimes I feel punk has lost its soul. It has become an easy way to access the mainstream and build street cred from a smaller scene. It has for some time been a sort of alternate microcosm, where all the stupid stereotypes, cliches, and cliques of high school still exist. And I dare say *MRR* is not above it all in many cases.

So, this is what I ask myself now. Do I want to be a part of a scene which by in large mirrors the exact society system which I hate? Do I want to change the scene I love and have given the larger portion of my life in involvement to? I've come to the conclusion long ago that I would rather change it than abandon it to hipster elites who never really cared about it in the first place. So what are the solutions to the problems we face? I no longer want to talk about the problems. I want to talk about something which hasn't been discussed enough in our scene. Solutions.

My next guest column will hopefully be about positive change. You can contact me with ideas/hatemail at: nooptionsrecords@gmail.com

Playlist: Heratys-Helvettiin Ja Takaisin-EP , Doom Town-Demo-Cassette, Neva-Fausse Conscience-LP, The Estranged-Subliminal Man LP, Complications s/t LP



I can't wait to go home... I am going back to Chicago in two days between "holidays" for a week and I can't fucking wait. I know some people in San Francisco who are hoping I will never return, but unfortunately for both of us, I am here to stay, assholes... I digress... This Saturday in Chicago there is a queercore show happening. It's funny that I live in San Francisco and there is one, maybe two, queer hardcore bands around while back in Chicago there is a show going on. Funny...

I guess the Midwest is still largely overlooked when it comes to the punk scene. It's too bad, cuz there seem to be a slew of killer new bands popping up all the time. I just reviewed a CD by a band called DECAY AFTER DEATH that was rad. It's a mix of my favorite early metal and punk. Read the review in the records section... I heard about this band called CORPSE GAS that I have yet to see live, but I have heard one of their songs from beloved MySpace and they are a UK82 sounding anarcho punk deal. They aren't exactly reinventing the wheel with the track I did manage to hear, but they are definitely a band I will be watching out for. KRANG just had their 7" pass through these doors for review and I love this stenchcore mess with one of my favorite raspy vocal styles ever. The artwork is pretty amazing with a fold out poster of two punk dudes making out. Nice. One of my favorite new bands of which I own nothing by is SEX BUNKER. From what I have heard, it's like a "harder-cored" MINUTEMEN with some BIG BOYS thrown in. I hope I can catch them play some time while in Chicago because I haven't heard anything this exciting in a while. Hopefully they will just get better the more I hear... CORPUS LUTEUM is a newer three piece with two ladies and a dude. The song structures are pretty simple, pretty crustirific and metallic without any folky break downs, (thanks guys) and scratchy, higher pitched, raspy female vocals. Another new band called SOSPECHOSOS hailing from the famed Chicago Southside Latino punk scene, who sound like a Chicago style Latino punk with some CÓLERA mixed in. Reverbed vocals and hardcore beats, they have a tape out now. I have it, get it, it's good!

A split tape came through here a little while ago with SEA OF SHIT and SOCIALLY RETARDED that was pretty exciting. SEA OF SHIT has heavy guitars with some atmospheric feedback, barky hardcore vocals and crusty raspy throat screaming vocals as back up. It's a weird, sometimes dissonant combination, but it seems to work. There are some blast beats mixed in with brutal hardcore, with a combination of the two to keep you ear interested, but not so jumbled that it sounds shitty. SOCIALLY RETARDED is this weird but awesome mix of noisy, dredgy shit like MAN IS THE BASTARD, then suddenly I am hearing something that sounds like early Finnish hardcore. I haven't heard enough to make a full assessment, but I want to. This band has some of the best vocals I have heard in a long time in the vein of a fuzzed out, screechy, less cartoon-y, yelled CRUCIFUCKS.

CÜLO is another band that some of you may know about by now since they just had a record come out on Deranged. Great hardcore. I saw one of their first, if not their first show, in Chicago at which I bought their demo tape. Even though they talked some shit on the Chicago scene in their interview in *MRR* #327, they are a killer band... Another band that has been around for a bit is WHITE RÖSE, or VALKOINEN RUUSU, who play punk in homage to Finnish Hardcore. Noisy, chaotic,

reverbed vocals and all it's good stuff. I have seen this band play and they rip…

So, if I missed anyone or any new bands, I apologize, but if I don't know about you, it's cuz you haven't told me. So hit me up and let me know what's going on. Or better yet, someone please do a Chicagoland scene report already. I live 1863 miles (2998 km, 1619 nautical miles) from Chicago and *I* am writing about it. C'mon!

Miscellaneous junk: The new NERVESKADE LP makes me wanna tear my face off, it's so damn good!

The remastered CERVIX demo is amazing. They are a female fronted noisy as shit, UKish CONFUSE GAI (confused guy…heheh…) HC. It's great stuff!

Check out the NO STATIK 45 if you can get your hands on it, if not, I will be playing a track on my next radio show unless someone beats me to it.

DUCK AND COVER's last show was amazing. I am sad to see them go.

More columns to follow about language, color, feminism and more things that make weak people angry and boring people bored. Haha! Fuck you and up the fucking punks!

This is the comics issue. Being one of the coordinators through this historic *MRR* event, I am dorking pretty hard on this. *Love and Rockets* was a pretty big step in self-discovery for me and I am sure for many other Latina punk girls as well. Ed Luce is a breath of fresh air. DIY and punk, he and collaborator Matt Wobensmith have created something hilarious and unique with *Wuvable Oaf*. Avi Spivak's work is something like that of a million dollar painting that I would wanna look at everyday. He is a talented man. And without guest coordinator Janelle Hessig, our comics expert, comics artist and funny as shit lady, none of this would have been possible. Thank you!

Email me at:
mariam@maximumrocknroll.com.

My Mind is a Plastic Bag/I'm a Cliche

This month I have nothing to say! Really, nothing. I've spent about ten hours staring at this fake piece of paper on my computer screen thinking about the extent to which I have nothing of value to impart to the readership of *MRR* this month. I am eating green beans and listening to X-Ray Spex. My boss cut my hours in half, which is making my financial future fragile. Other things of note that are withering into nothin' in my numbskull include… a general excitement about the Olympia hardcore scene after witnessing both Outlook and Weird TV destroy it in the Bay Area this month. I already touched on the majesty of Weird TV on tape (you can read all about that at my online column archive whatwewantisfree.blogspot.com) but seeing them live??? Definitely one of the best live bands so far this year, and I wait with bated breath for their record, which will be released on the faultless Perennial records, out of Olympia too. I would advise buying everything Perennial put out. So far, it has all been essential… And Weird TV are probably the band I am most psyched on since the days of extolling the merits of Sex Vid, no lie. Totally different band idea but when listening, there's a similar level of dopamine injected into brain cells or however that works. You should send off for the tape if you want to hear the most frantic raging lady vocals that combine most eloquently the best parts of Alice Bag and Theresa Brat, emphasis on the word "raging." I am trying to figure out where you can get one, but all the options seem to be moot, sold out, not available. An EP is forthcoming on Perennial (www.perennialdeath.com), and also something on singer Lizette's sister's label M'Ladys is mentioned!?? Who knows, at any rate Weird TV is the sum of its parts, Ben's drumming is propulsive and somehow reminds me of Minutemen but this is a hardcore band, Erica's bass playing is relentless and the guitar is mindmelding psyche doom hardcore youth grab your knives now. Also, apparently the girls of Olympia are influenced by the Australian sharpie movement of the '70s in terms of hair cuts! FUN FAX.

Outlook are part of a new politically charged youth crew orientated Olympia hardcore scene that also includes the Hysterics, an all girl band I have yet to hear to my chagrin. We saw them play at the best new secret all ages space, the basement of an arts center warehouse. Something about seeing a hardcore band blow minds in a basement will always check all the right boxes in my tired brain at least… Honestly was not expecting much, went to check out Neo-Cons and No Statik, local bands, and after a week of putting this thing you hold in your hands together 12 hours a day a million days in a row was planning on leaving soon after aforementioned bands played. This did not happen! Outlook killed it, we bought the 7", and next month there will be a review of said record and an extensive Olympia scene report penned by Ben of the awesome *Nuts!?* zine… You can check out the more crew oly HC shit here: www.oursound.net. Alsoof note: Scotty Karate told a story about how the last time he saw Mariam was when he stayed at her house in Chicago after a show, and woke up to some girl pissing on him.

ENDTIMES!
layla@maximumrocknroll.com
1-watch my teenage band and see how much my accent has mutated via this video of the Huggy Bear/Bikini Kill tour of the UK in '93 http://vimeo.com/11737681 also contains super amazing footage of the Raincoats with palmolive on drums... 2-next month the second volume of my tape review backlog!

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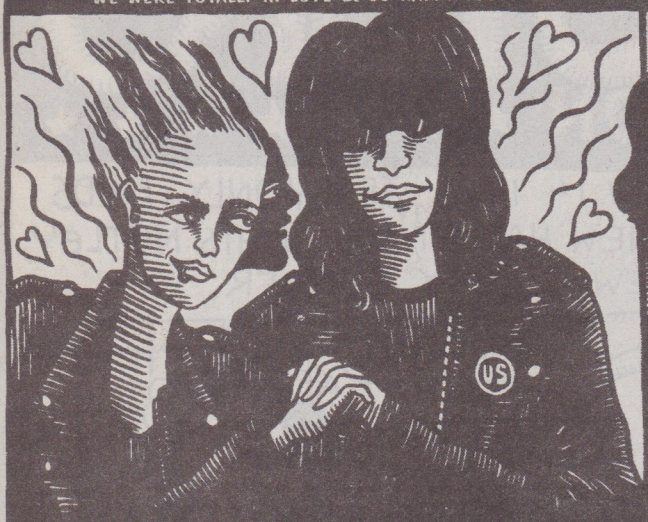
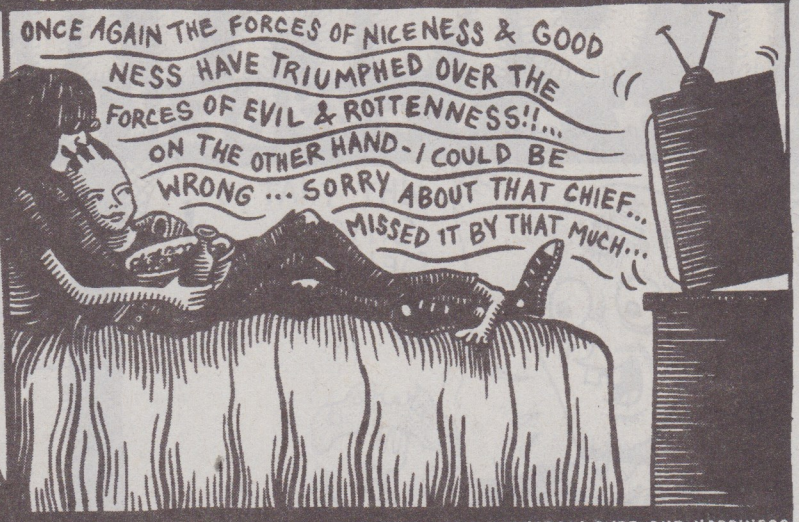
WE WOULD STAY UP LATE & WATCH OLD MOVIES LIKE BEACH BLANKET BINGO
& RE-RUNS OF GET SMART WHILE DRINKING BEER & EATING POPCORN IN BED





WE WOULD HANG OUT & PLAY PINBALL AT PAUL'S LOUNGE & I WOULD HELP JOEY TILT THE MACHINE

WE WOULD GO TO CONEY ISLAND & DRINK BEER & EAT CONEY FRIES OUTSIDE THE FREAK SHOW

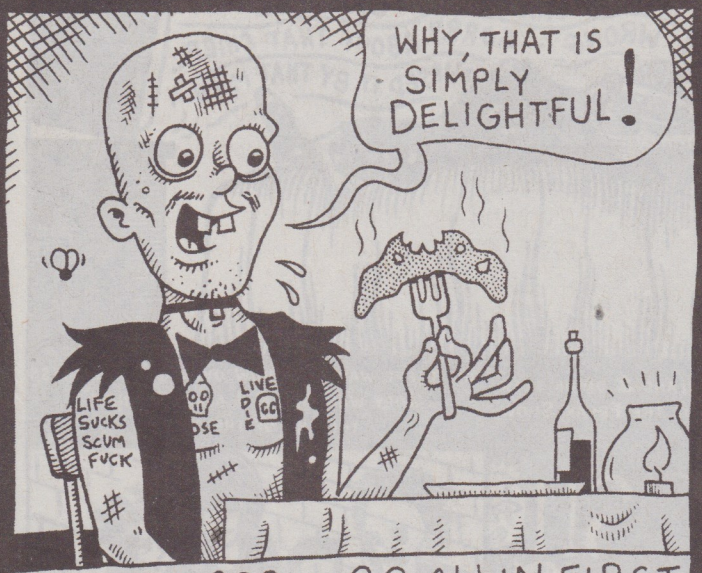
BUT THERE WAS A SHADOW OVER OUR HAPPINESS
JOEY WAS SICK & I ALREADY KNEW THE END OF THE STORY

AT THE END OF THE DREAM I WAS KISSING JOEY GOOD-BYE
MY HEART WAS BREAKING - JOEY WAS A REALLY INCREDIBLE KISSER

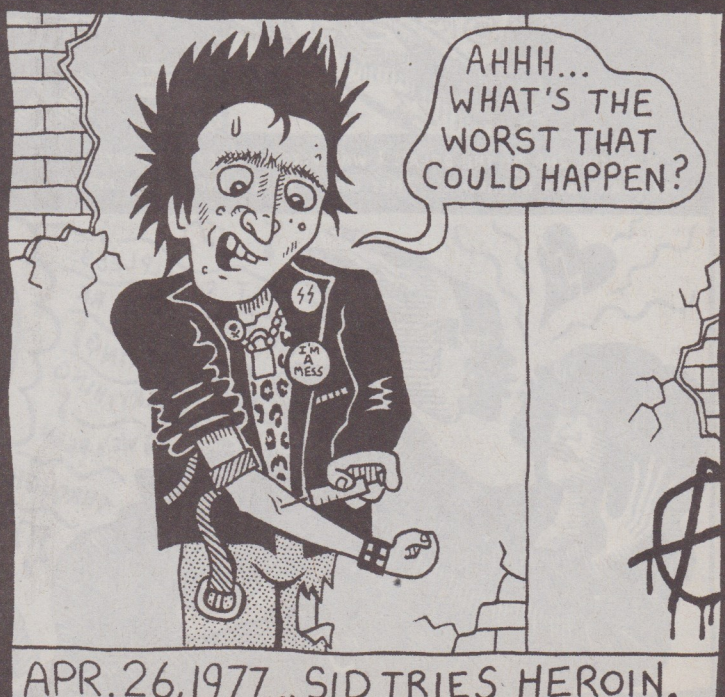
WHEN I WOKE UP I FELT SO SAD & LONELY & I MISSED JOEY SO MUCH - THEN
I FOUND OUT THAT JOE STRUMMER HAD DIED IN HIS SLEEP THAT SAME NIGHT

GREAT MOMENTS IN PUNK HISTORY

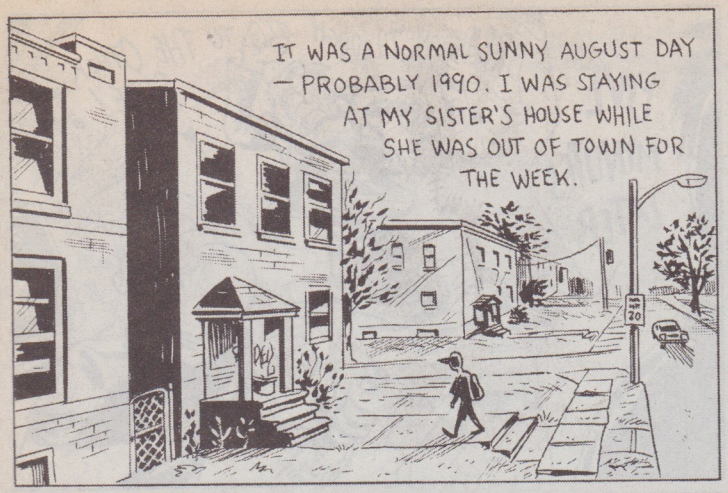
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ BY BEN LYON ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

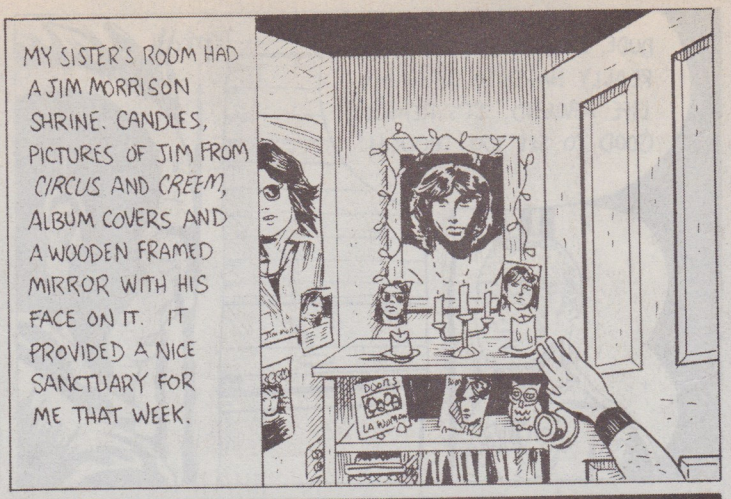


OCT. 3, 1982... GG ALLIN FIRST EATS HIS OWN SHIT.



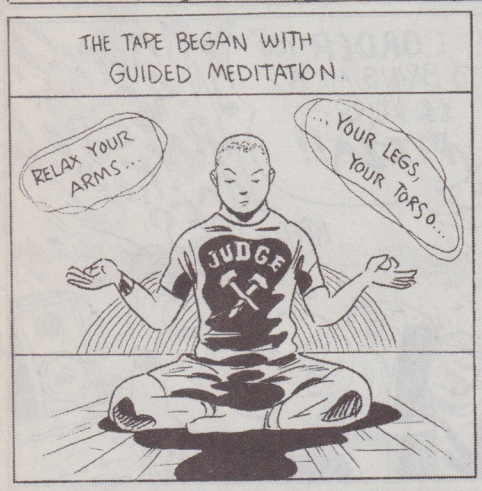
APR. 26, 1977... SID TRIES HEROIN.

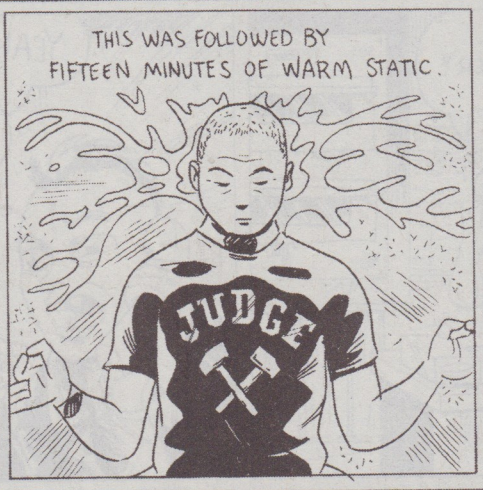


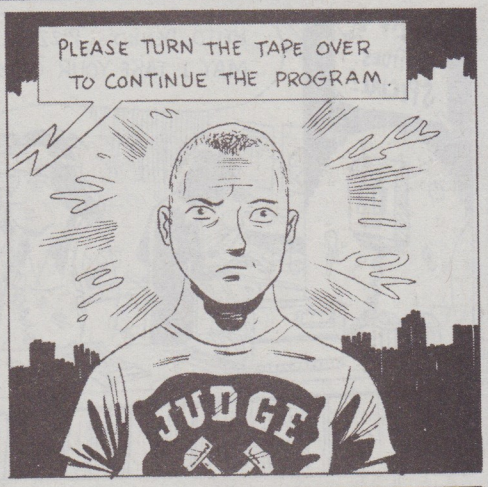


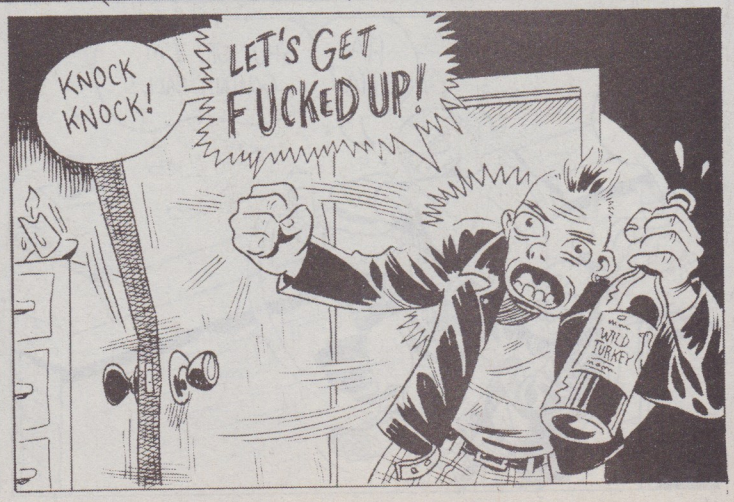
"THE ASTRAL EDGE.."

BY JEFF WILSON + TED MAY









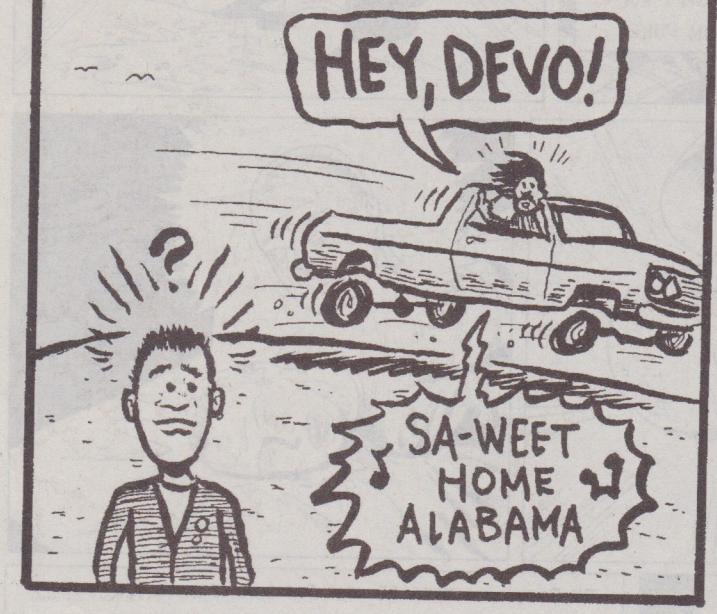
DUDE, I CAN'T. I'M WORKING REALLY HARD TO TURN MY LIFE AROUND. IT'S REALLY GOOD TO SEE YOU, THOUGH!
JUDGE
FIVE MINUTES LATER
BREAK ON THROUGH TO THE OTHER SIDE!
LATER STILL..
MAN, LOOK AT YOUR SISTER'S RECORDS! LED ZEPPLIN!? REO!? YECHH! ...HO HO! WHAT HAVE WE HERE?
SUPERTRAMP
DUDE, DUDE! THIS ONE!
FRAMPT
QUEEN
COKE & DORITOES SPECIAL!
HELLO, DENKO'S PIZZA ... MAY I TAKE YOUR ORDER?
YEAH! I ORDER YOU TO BRING ME A $@#4 PIZZA!!
ROCK OF AGES! ROCK OF AGES KEEP ROLLIN'
I LOVE YOU, MAN!
HA HA!
SHUT UP! I'M GONNA FALL!
ATTENTION, PIZZA MAN! THIS IS JIM MORRISON! PLEASE ACCEPT MY FACE AS PAYMENT FOR THAT DELICIOUS PIZZA!

I WOKE UP AROUND 3A.M. IN PIZZA VOMIT.
UGH!
I THINK I PUKED THE BED, DUDE.
IT WASN'T EVEN MY OWN PUKE.
I SAT UP AND VOWED...
NO MORE DRINKING... EVER!
PLOP!
I DON'T KNOW IF IT WAS A DREAM, OR A DELUSION FROM BEING OVER SATURATED WITH WILD TURKEY AND PIZZA, OR THE CUMULATIVE RESULT OF THE ASTRAL PROJECTION TAPES THAT WEEK, BUT THERE I WAS LOOKING DOWN ON MYSELF AND JAIME.
THE ROOM WAS TRASHED. THE JIM SHRINE IN TATTERS. AT ONE POINT I THINK I SAW THE FAT, BEARDED JIM MORRISON IN THE CORNER OF THE ROOM.
LET'S SWIM TO THE MOON... LET'S CLIMB THROUGH THE TIDE...
IT WAS PROBABLY TEN YEARS BEFORE I HAD ANOTHER DRINK.
...PENETRATE THE EVENIN' THAT THE CITY SLEEPS TO HIDE

"HEY DEVO!"

JAIME CRESPO © 2010

I FIRST ENCOUNTERED THE "HEY, DEVO" PHENOMENON AROUND MID-1980...

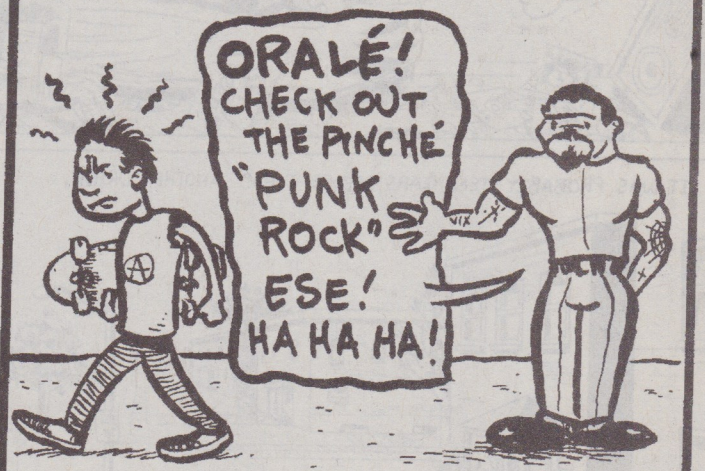


Y'SEE, A FEW YEARS EARLIER MY BEST FRIEND AND I HAD BECOME INVOLVED IN A NEW MUSIC THE MEDIA WAS CALLING **PUNK ROCK!**

BY 1979 WE HAD CUT OUR HAIR, BOUGHT THRIFT STORE CLOTHES + LISTENED TO OUR FAVORITE BANDS OF THE TIME...

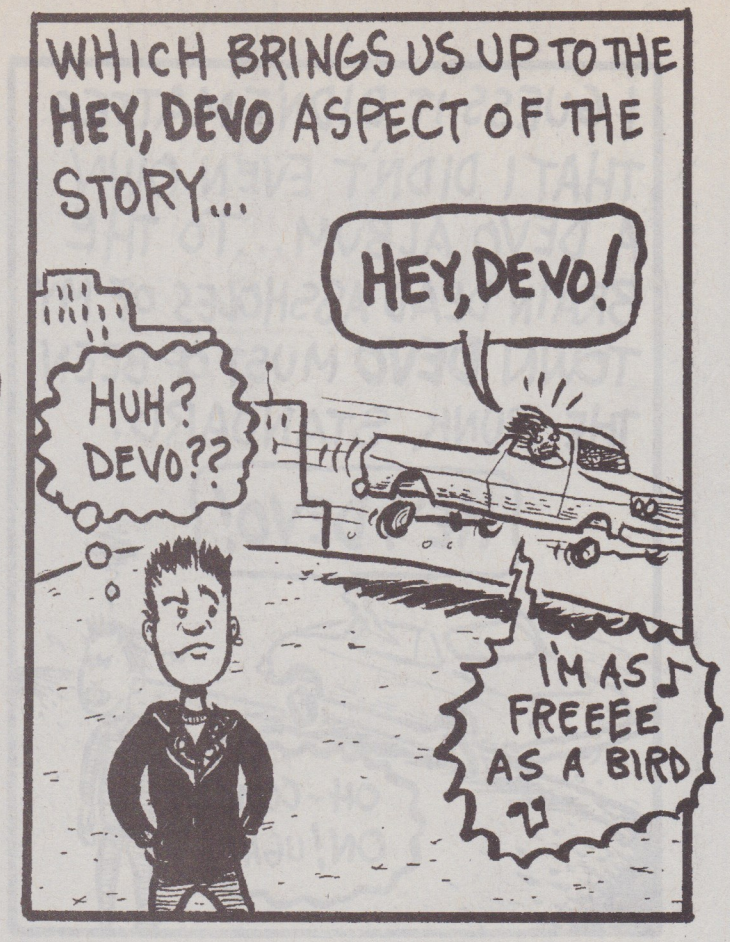
THE RAMONES, SEX PISTOLS, X, RICHARD HELL + THE VOIDOIDS AND OUR FAVORITE; **THE CLASH!**

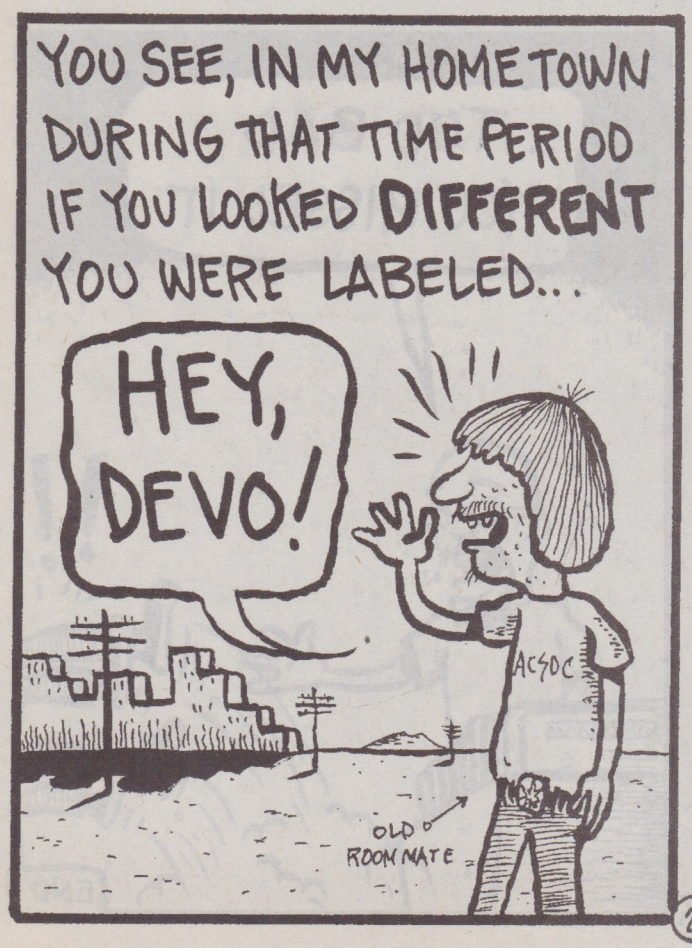
AND WE WERE DOING THIS AS **CHICANOS** FROM A MIXED LATINO & AFRICAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY...

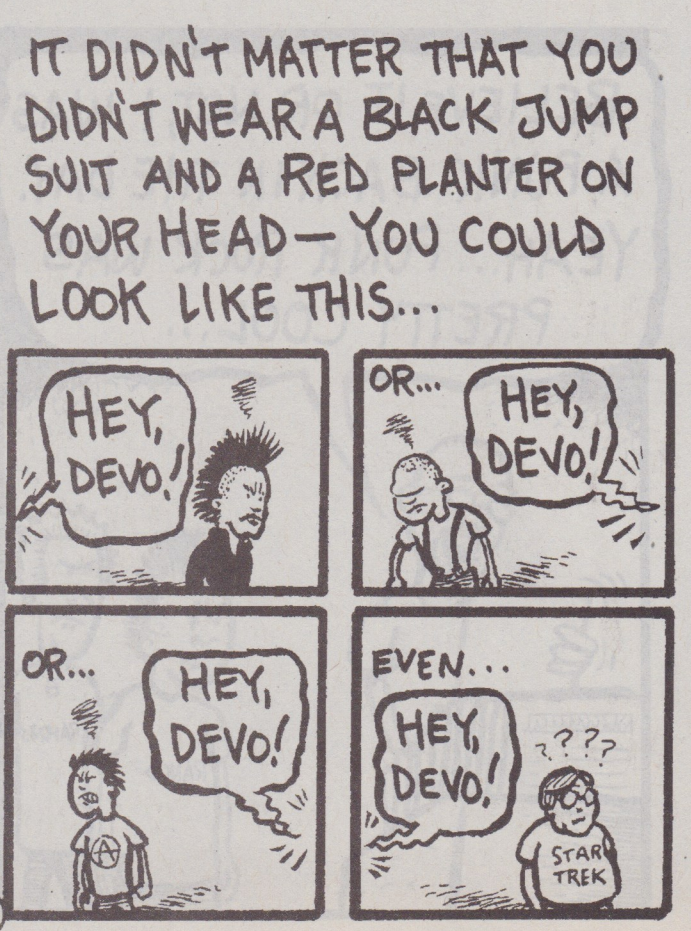


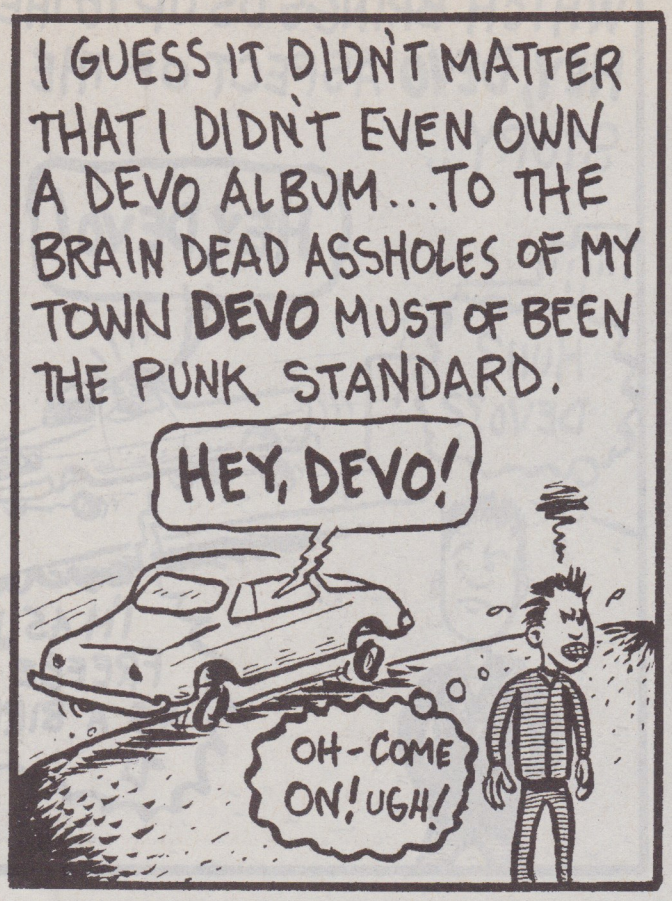
...WE CAUGHT **SO MUCH SHIT!**

WE DIDN'T GET HALF AS MUCH SHIT IN OUR GHETTO NEIGHBORHOOD AS WE DID OUTSIDE OF OUR NEIGHBORHOOD...
HEY! NEW WAVE FAGGOT!
AW, GO FUCK YOUR MOTHER AGAIN, HICK!
THIS GOT ME CHASED A FEW BLOCKS.


WHICH BRINGS US UP TO THE HEY, DEVO ASPECT OF THE STORY...
HEY, DEVO!
HUH? DEVO??
I'M AS FREEEE AS A BIRD


YOU SEE, IN MY HOMETOWN DURING THAT TIME PERIOD IF YOU LOOKED DIFFERENT YOU WERE LABELED...
HEY, DEVO!
AC/DC
OLD ROOMMATE


IT DIDN'T MATTER THAT YOU DIDN'T WEAR A BLACK JUMP SUIT AND A RED PLANTER ON YOUR HEAD — YOU COULD LOOK LIKE THIS...
HEY, DEVO!
OR...
HEY, DEVO!
OR...
HEY, DEVO!
EVEN...
HEY, DEVO!
???
STAR TREK


I GUESS IT DIDN'T MATTER THAT I DIDN'T EVEN OWN A DEVO ALBUM...TO THE BRAIN DEAD ASSHOLES OF MY TOWN DEVO MUST OF BEEN THE PUNK STANDARD.
HEY, DEVO!
OH-COME ON! UGH!

TODAY...
I GUESS THE KIDS THESE DAYS DON'T HAVE TO GO THROUGH THAT SINCE 'PUNK' IS PRETTY MUCH MAINSTREAM NOW.
SO... PUNK ROCK, HUH?
YEAH! SO!?
DORK.
LOOKING AT RECORDS
RANCID

BELIEVE IT OR NOT, I WAS A PUNK BACK IN THE DAY. YEAH... PUNK ROCK WAS PRETTY COOL...
RANCID
RAMONES

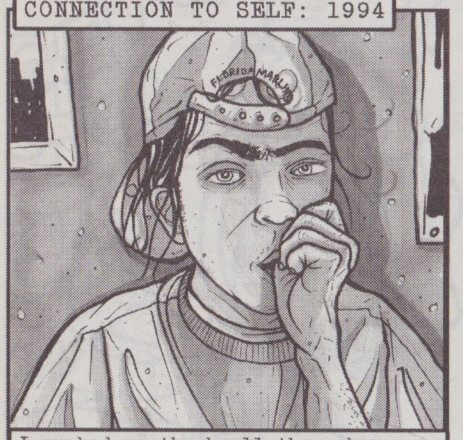
...TOO BAD YOU MISSED IT.
!!
END

EXCERPT FROM:

SPIT AND PASSION

BY: CRISTY C. ROAD

CONNECTION TO SELF: 1994

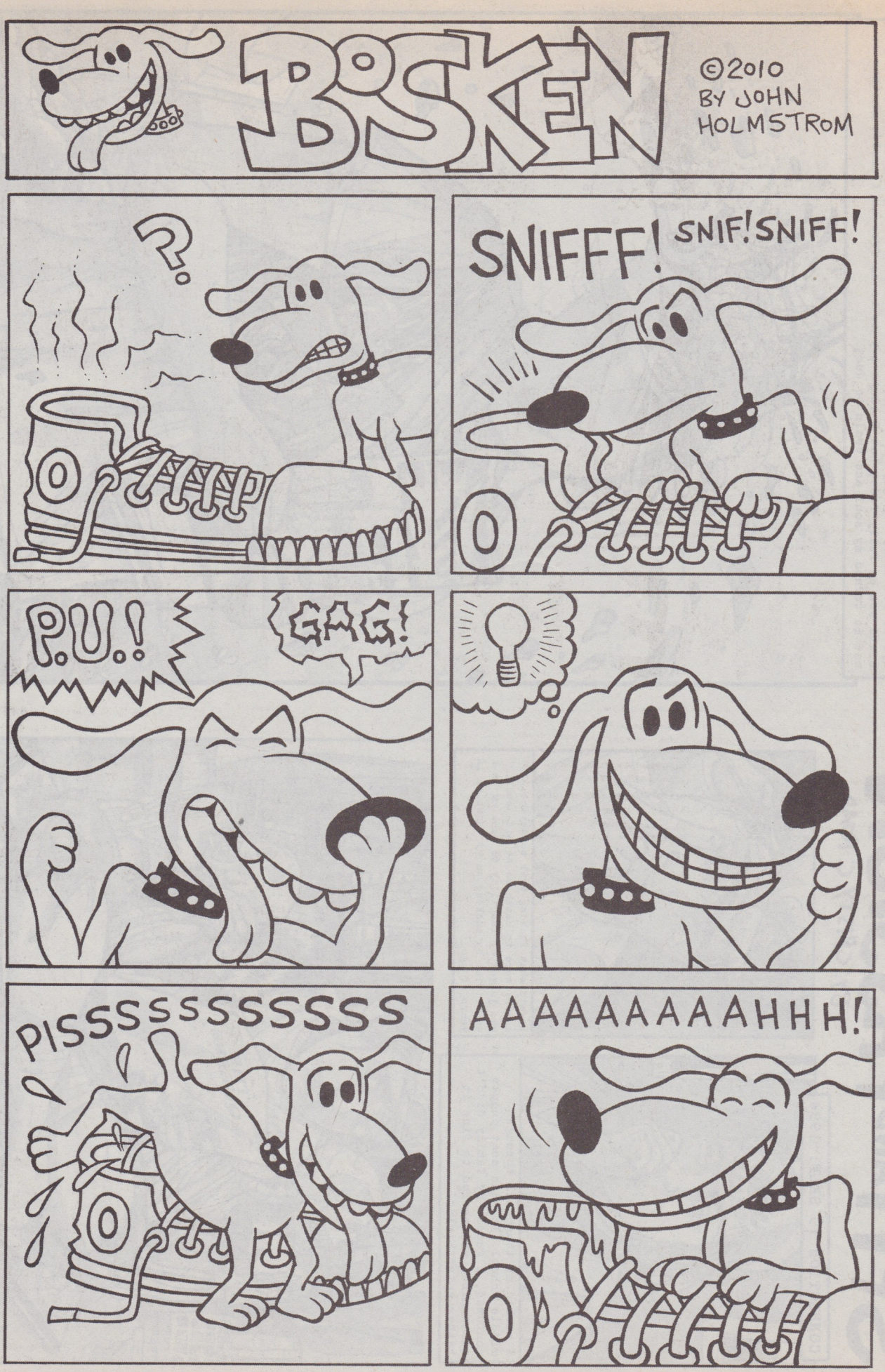


I sucked my thumb all through middle school. It made most people confused, I guess. My family didn't quite mind; and seemed to find it rather entertaining.

I said what fucking ever to anyone; if anyone were to catch me at mid- suck; who judged my inability to face my insecurities by sucking on my thumb at 12 years of age.

Despite those inevitable insecurities that came with being a gay Cuban girl in 1994, I knew that I was nearing maturity now. Now that I had found a subculture- an identity.

Granted; my reality was constricted; whether or not I used these tools to meticulously mold my projected self confidence. I was a big gay loser, digging myself out of my big gay hole. I could not be myself on a day to day basis. I could not be fully free; but I could try to be as free as I could; whether or not it turned my soul and brain to dust.


BOSKEN
©2010 BY JOHN HOLMSTROM
?
SNIFFF!
SNIF!SNIFF!
P.U.!
GAG!
PISSSSSSSSSSS
AAAAAAAAAAHHH!

JAIME HERNANDEZ

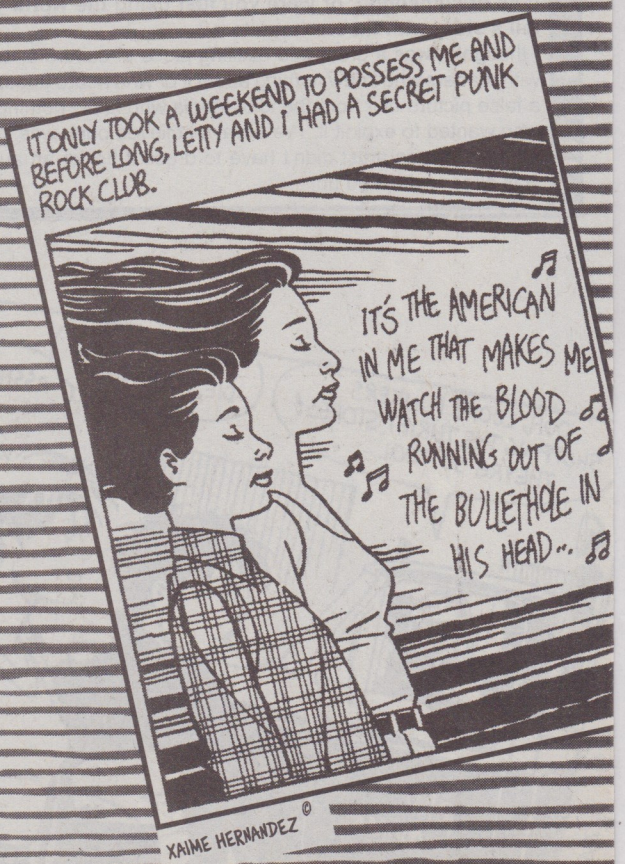
For a while, I hated comics. I would pick up some super hero rag and look at the leggy blondes in spandex and think, "Barf! Like I wanna watch Ken and Barbie act out their fantasies!" Even as I warmed to comics, particularly alternative comics, I still always felt at arm's length from the stories. I felt like it was always some guy having an existential crisis, while being mystified by more of those leggy blonde women. Yawn. That all changed with a single comic.

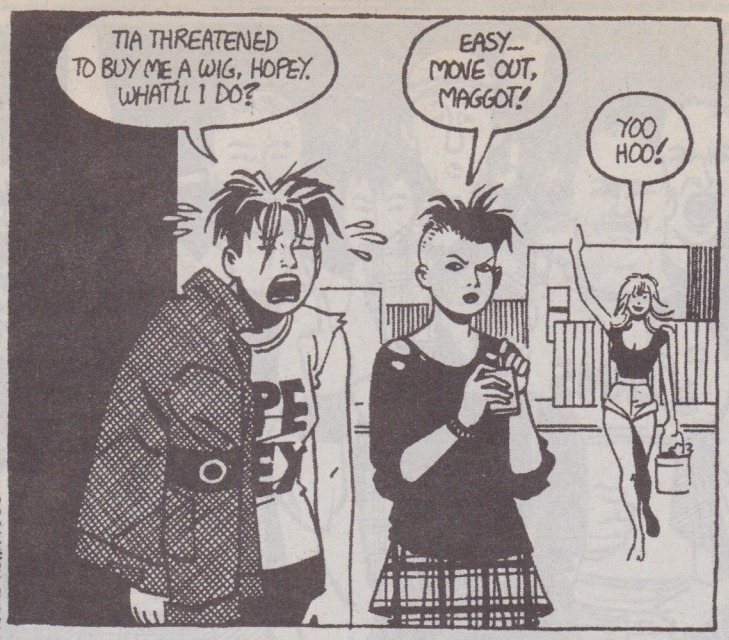
I don't remember how Love and Rockets *entered my life, or whom I have to thank for it (which is a shame because they deserve as much thanks as I can wring out of my heart). I just know the feeling I got when I began to read. I think I actually kicked my legs and squealed when I saw Latina punk women who were smart and funny just living their crazy lives.*

For almost 30 years Jaime Hernandez has been sharing his inky black lines that he uses to fill the page with a wealth of drama and beauty. His gift for storytelling outpaced only by his gift for crafting deep multifaceted characters. Characters that have become so real to me over the years I think of them from time to time, I wonder what they are doing, how they are.

Jaime was kind enough to let me ask some questions to satisfy my curiosity about the man who created some of my favorite women.

Intro and Interview by Ariel Awesome





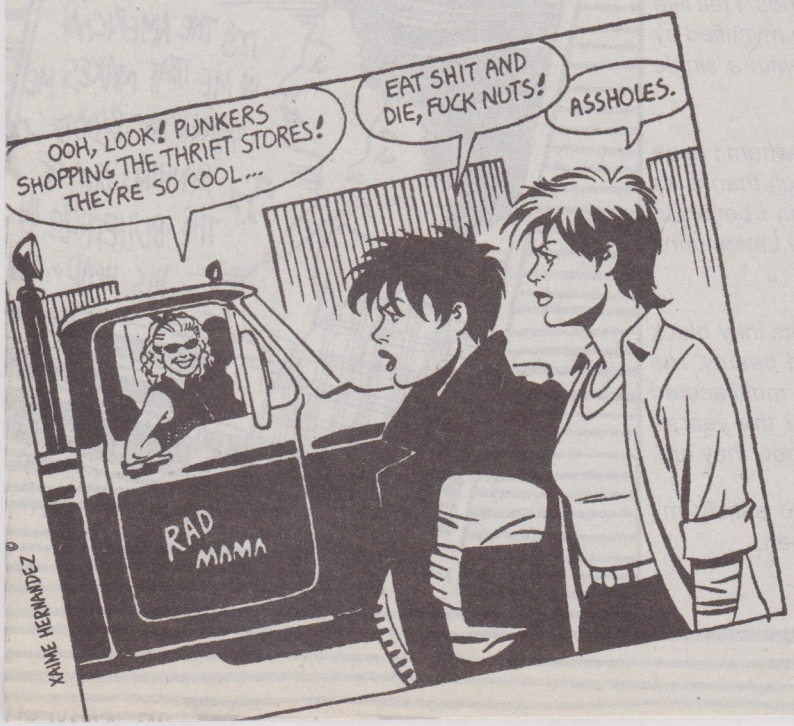
MRR: After more than 25 years of working on comics, what makes you excited about the medium still?
I guess that I've still got a lot of stories to tell and I still can't think of a better medium to tell them in.

MRR: Are there any current artists whose work you think bodes well for the future of comics?
I don't want say any specifics because I hate to leave anybody out, but I am proud to say that there are so many artists these days with their own style and voice. More than there has ever been in the history of comics, all of them being from alternative comics, naturally.

MRR: The earlier stories are somewhat of a documentary of what punk life in and around LA was like in the late '70s early '80s, did you think of it as documenting, or were you just using the world you knew best to tell a story with these characters?
I thought it was a great and exciting piece of culture or subculture to share with readers who knew nothing about it or who heard about it but were getting a false picture of it from the idiot media who knew nothing about it either, or who wanted to exploit it. I've always believed punk was crazy and inventive enough that an artist didn't have to dress it up for an audience because it was already dressed up.

MRR: This kind of truthful portrayal of life with little slivers of the surreal, or fantastic is something that both you and Gilbert seem to be working with, even though your stories are about very different people and places, why do you think that is? Is there any particular kind of fiction or storytelling you are either reading or interested in? Or is this just a Hernandez thing, growing up as brothers in a particular moment in a particular place?
The latter. A lot of it comes from the stuff we grew up hearing from older relatives and friends; stories about the old country, which included ghost stories and other things. Most of all I just think it's fun to add a small surreal twist to a real life story now and then.

MRR: I've read that you put a lot of yourself into the characters you've written. With Maggie and Hopey becoming icons for young punk women, does it feel strange for you to be at the root of that? Essentially as a Chicana punk heroine?
Sometimes I feel guilty about it. You know, a lot of these types of women I'm writing about have taken tons of shit for trying to make their own statement by just being who they are and along comes this man who puts it down on paper and ends up getting a lot of the accolades.



MRR: That's interesting, I actually hadn't thought of that angle. I meant more like when women tell you how much they relate to or are inspired by the women you've created. What is that like?
It's pretty darn cool. It's like, either I did a correct portrayal of women which is important to me or that I inspired a reader to do their own thing which is equally important, or both. Everybody wins.

MRR: The aesthetics of your stories in *Love & Rockets* have a very old film noir vibe to them, are you a big classic movie fan? If so, what movies?
I love old movies. I love the way they move, the way they were told. I like anything from film noir to horror to romantic comedy to sci-fi to social issues. From *Pickup on South Street* to *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein* to *A Letter to Three Wives* to *Invaders from Mars* to *Salt of the Earth*...big budget or small, it's all good.

MRR: So, in the current issues of *Love & Rockets* everybody is all grown up now, and though their no longer spinning around

XAIME HERNANDEZ ©

XAIME HERNANDEZ ©

screaming lyrics at each other, music must still be some part of their lives. What do you think our favorite Hoppers residents are listening to?
Jeez, it's hard to say. I mean, I listen to other things besides punk these days but I still like Black Flag and the Sex Pistols so somebody in my comic still listens to them, I guess. I don't know if it has ever shown, but I have always thought that many of my characters don't particularly like the same stuff I do and I prefer it that way. Gives them minds of their own. I always imagine Maggie would like something that I would find sappy and boring.

MRR: Personally, I always pegged Maggie as a Morrissey fan.
More like an Air Supply fan. Oog! Now I'm stretching it.

MRR: You say you give them minds of their own, do your characters ever surprise you?
In a surreal way they do. I mean, it is me really pulling the strings but they get credit when on occasion I'm surprised by an idea I just put down.

MRR: There was, I hear, a negative reaction to Maggie transitioning from a svelte but curvy teen into a bigger woman. Do you think the reaction was to her moving out of the usual leggy and tiny-waisted, stylized bodies comics fans expect, or do you think it was more an aversion to seeing characters change, as if fans were afraid she wouldn't be the same old Maggie anymore?
Could be both but I tend to believe the "No fat chicks" rule will forever remain in fanboy society. My proof is that Maggie may still be the only heavy main character in current comics. And I'm not just talking about mainstream super hero comics.

XAIME HERNANDEZ ©

XAIME HERNANDEZ ©

MRR: So many comics have frozen their characters at a certain age, at a certain period of their life, why was it important for you to move forward and age your characters?
Aging them gives them life. They have a past, present and future, therefore they hopefully seem more real.

MRR: You've been working with these characters so long, do you ever feel bad for how much shit you put them through?
Yes.

MRR: Ok, so this question is a little grandiose, but you've called your work your "love letter to the world" what would you hope the world would take away after reading?
An enjoyable time mostly. One that will stay with them longer than that ten or fifteen minutes it took them to read it.

XAIME HERNANDEZ ©

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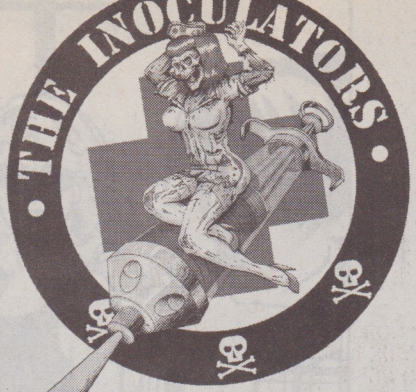
THE INOCULATORS



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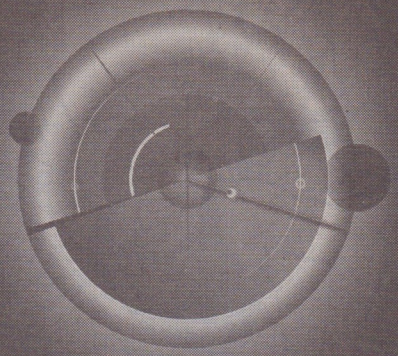
COLONY



Hudson Valley, NY's COLONY's self-titled debut is seven songs of non-stop intensity. Think the heaviness of EYEHATEGOD and HIS HERO IS GONE mixed with the fast paced energy of CURSED and CONVERGE.

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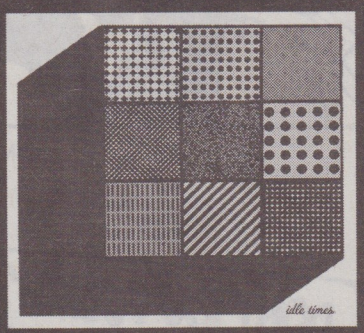
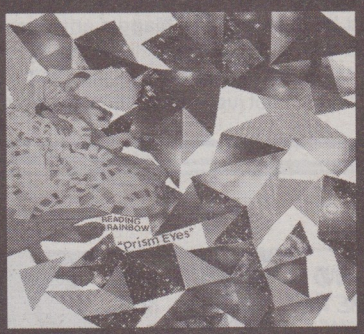


POWER
(out 10/26)

PUKE
(out 10/26)



PRESTIGE
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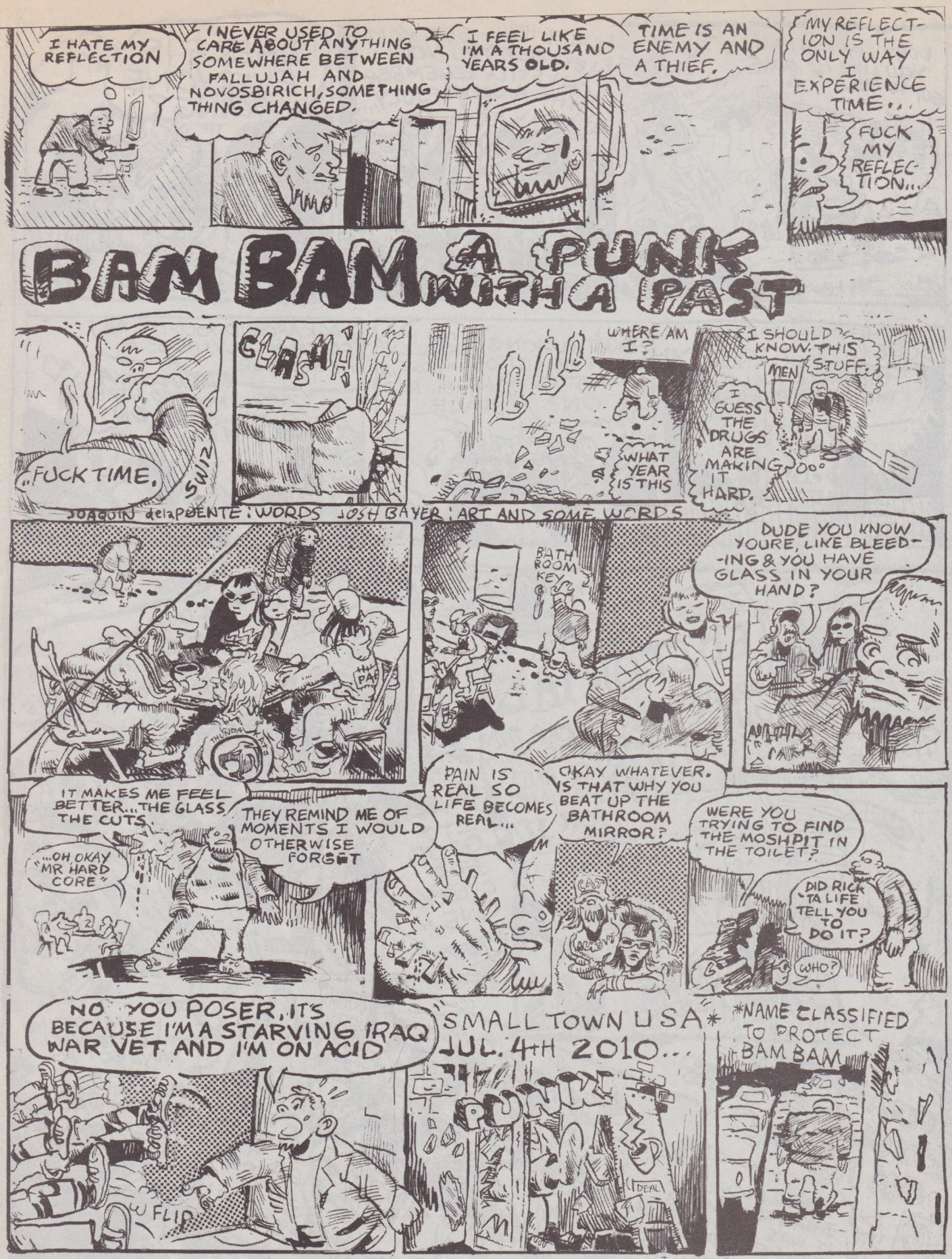
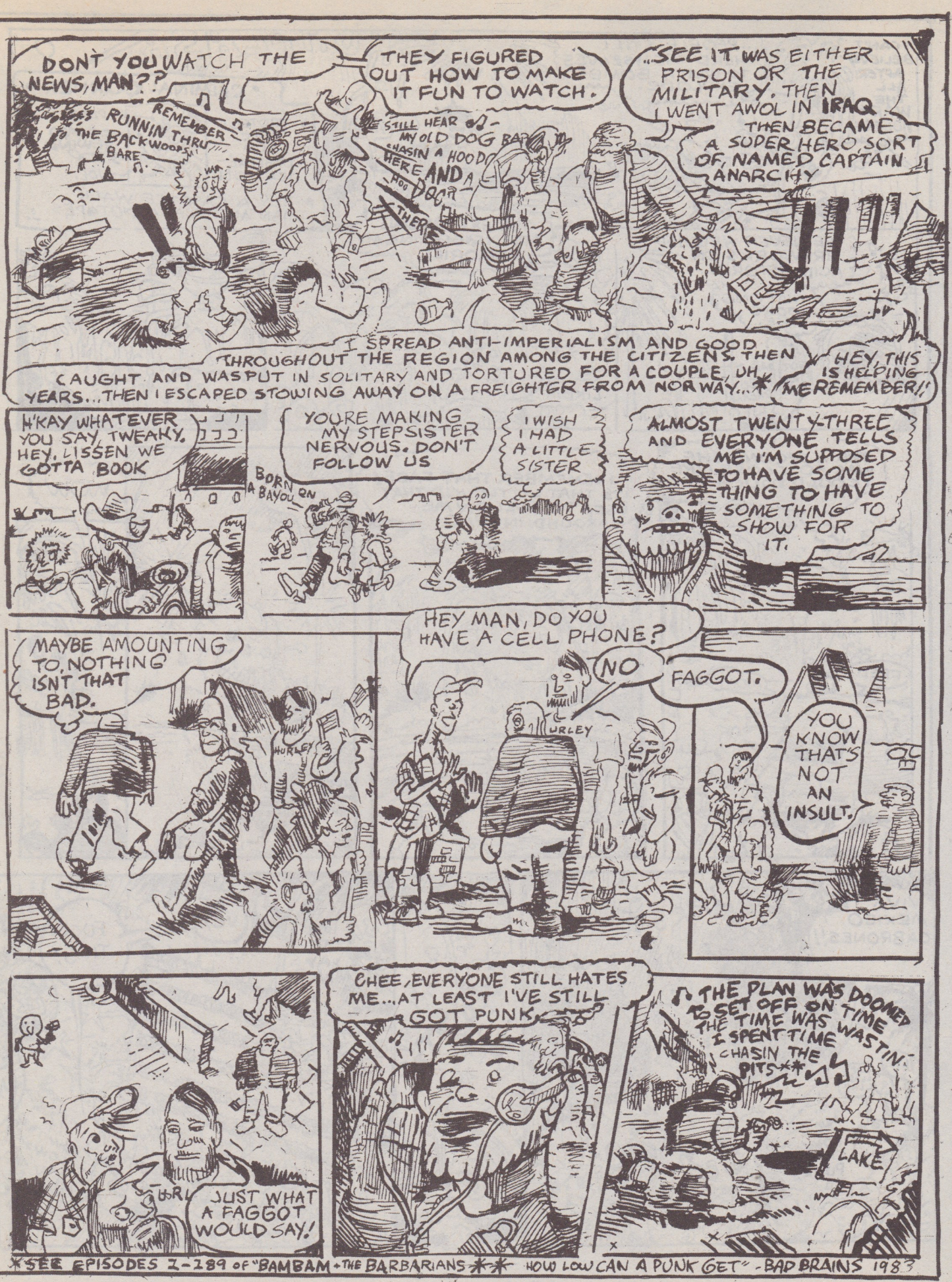
HOZAC


I HATE MY REFLECTION
I NEVER USED TO CARE ABOUT ANYTHING SOMEWHERE BETWEEN FALLUJAH AND NOVOSBIRICH, SOMETHING THING CHANGED.
I FEEL LIKE I'M A THOUSAND YEARS OLD.
TIME IS AN ENEMY AND A THIEF.
MY REFLECTION IS THE ONLY WAY I EXPERIENCE TIME...
FUCK MY REFLECTION...
BAM BAM A PUNK WITH A PAST
"FUCK TIME," SWIZ
CLASH
WHERE AM I?
WHAT YEAR IS THIS
I SHOULD KNOW THIS STUFF.
MEN
I GUESS THE DRUGS ARE MAKING IT HARD.
JOAQUIN delaPUENTE: WORDS JOSH BAYER: ART AND SOME WORDS
BATH ROOM KEY
DUDE YOU KNOW YOURE, LIKE BLEED-ING & YOU HAVE GLASS IN YOUR HAND?
IT MAKES ME FEEL BETTER... THE GLASS THE CUTS.
...OH OKAY "MR HARD CORE"
THEY REMIND ME OF MOMENTS I WOULD OTHERWISE FORGET
PAIN IS REAL SO LIFE BECOMES REAL...
OKAY WHATEVER. IS THAT WHY YOU BEAT UP THE BATHROOM MIRROR?
WERE YOU TRYING TO FIND THE MOSHPIT IN THE TOILET?
DID RICK-TA LIFE TELL YOU TO DO IT?
WHO?
NO YOU POSER, IT'S BECAUSE I'M A STARVING IRAQ WAR VET AND I'M ON ACID
FLIP
SMALL TOWN USA* JUL. 4TH 2010...
PUNK
IDEAL
*NAME CLASSIFIED TO PROTECT BAM BAM
JOAQUIN delaPUENTE: WORDS JOSH BAYER: ART AND SOME WORDS

DONT LET THE MAN GET YOU LIKE HE DONE GOT TO ME...
CAUSE HE'LL GET YOU HE'LL GET YOU NOW I CAN STILL REMEMBER THE FOURTH OF JULY...
WHERE IS EVERYONE GOING?
BRO! DUH!!
...TO THE FIREWORKS, DUDE!!
DO YOU KNOW THE DATE INCLUDING THE YEAR, PLEASE?
QUIT FUCKING WITH ME, VISITOR Q.! WHAT'RE YOU ON?
NO REALLY! I'M LOST IN TIME... AND SPACE
LOOK AROUND YOU - ITS THE FORTH OF JULY! HERES A NEWSPAPER
CHASIN DOWN A HOO DOO HERE.. BORN ON A BAYOU
JUL 04 2010 DAILY FO
EDITORIAL
OBAMA PLAN TO CAP THA OIL SPILL AND END THE MISSION IN IRAQ AND I'M NOT PAYING FOR IT!
TEA PARTY DECLARES WAR ON MEXICO
I SHOULD HAVE BOMBED THE OIL RESERVES LONG AGO
SAUDI PRINCESS
IT'S GOOD FOR EVERY ONE!!
$ TAX REVENUES MEANT FOR US WORKERS
TEA PARTY DECLARES WAR ON MEXICO
HUH? 2010? LAST I CAN REMEMBER IT WAS 2006, BUSH WAS PRESIDENT
CUSTOMS
COCAINE
COCAINE
COKE
PLEASE MISTER NO SHOOT ME!
I DONT WANT TO GO TO AMERICA IT SUCKS!
...NOW ACCORDING TO THIS, ITS 2010... WE'VE GOT A MUSLIM PRESIDENT AND WE'RE AT WAR WITH MEXICO?



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I CAN'T BELIEVE AFTER ALL THE WAR + VIOLENCE
...PEOPLE STILL HERD THEMSELVES TO WATCH BOMBS EXPLODE.
TURN
YEAH
KUHFLASH
CRIMINAL CORNER
PROTECT MUSIC FROM DIGITALIZATION:
PLAY
F.FWARD
REWIND
STOP
VOL.
BUY A CASETTE WALK MAN AND PLAY AUDIOTAPES
LOST IN A CRAZY SCHEME
I'VE NEVER WATCHED FIREWORKS ON ACID BEFORE...
THAT ONE LOOKS LIKE...
GOT ME STRAPPED IN A DREAM
THE EXPLOSIONS ARE TRIGGERING MY MEMORIES
ANOTHA DOA
LIKE...
ZITA...?
FOR A SECOND SHE WAS SO CLOSE, LIKE I COULD TOUCH HER
CAN YOU HELP
FRED...
MOM
I REMEMBER THAT FACE! IT'S THAT LITTLE KID THAT USED TO FOLLOW ME AROUND IN RAQ
GASP
WOW
VIVA MEXICO, CABRONES!!
BURRST
YAY...
CLAP CLAP CLAP
HOW LOW CAN A PUNK
BURSTT
USA USA
YAY
DI VEY!
FUCK THIS!
HOW LOW? CAN A PUNK GET BET

LAST PAGE

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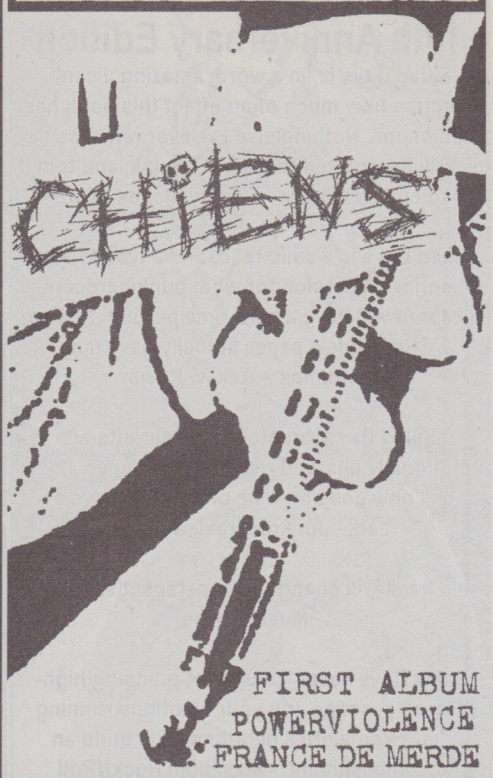

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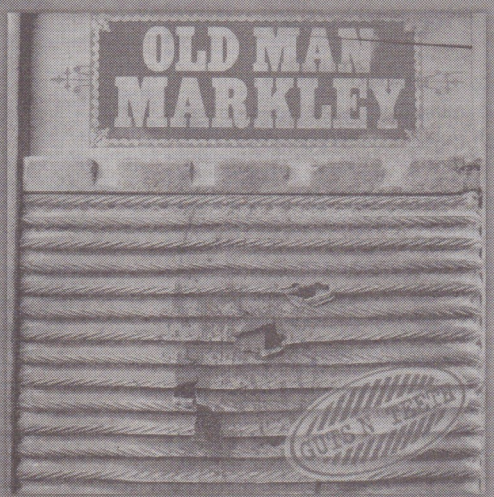

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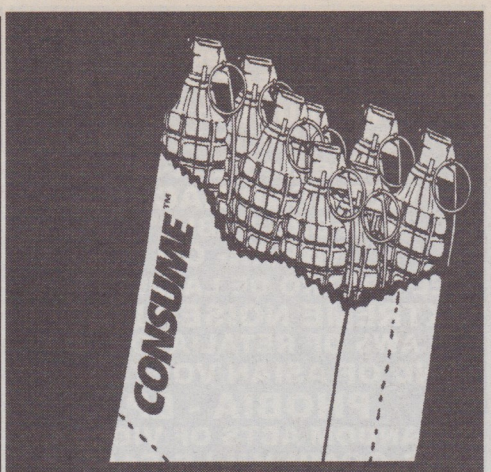

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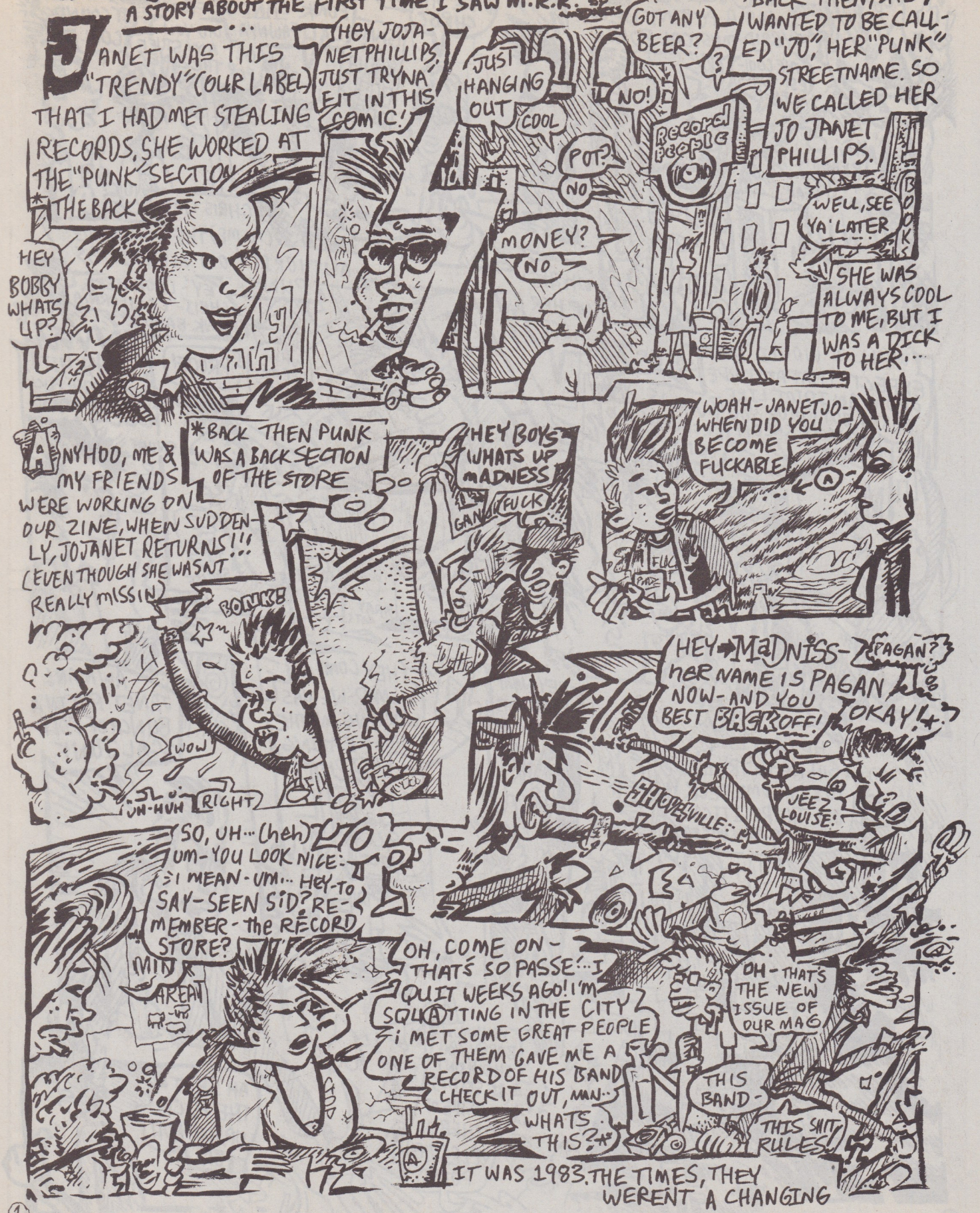

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IT SOUNDS LIKE SHIT, EY CHRIS?
GANG OF FOUR
IT SOUNDS LIKE IT'S FROM CALIFORNIA "PUNK" CANT BE FROM CALIFAWNYA
DID YOU GET ANY STUFF FOR THE ZINE?
I THINK IT SOUNDS COOL
SNAP!
CHRIS WAS (TO ME) THE REIGNING AUTHORITY ON ALL THINGS PUNK.
EY - LOOK HERE, CHRIS - "CALIFORNIA PUNK BAND "X"
© B.MAD 10
WHATS! UP HER ASS?
WELL I WOULD EXPECT THAT ATTITUDE FROM AN IDIOT LIKE BOBBY BUT I GIVE YOU MORE CREDIT
LATER
PUNK IS FROM ENGLAND OR N.Y., STUPID
WHY... LET ME SEE AT
PROOF!
SMASH HITS? WHAT THE FUCK KIND OF
FACE
MODA
SMASH HITS
STRAY CATS
SNURF
SNUFF
HEY WHAT ARE YOU CATS UP TO?
HEY COME ON IN, MAD - WE WAS WORKING ON THE MAG + EATING ACID
AW MAN! JANET PUT IN A BUNCH OF POLITICAL JUNK
HEY - I'M GOING TO TRY TO BUM SOME BEER OFF THE POLITICAL PUNKS - YOU IN?
NAH - I'M GHOST
BAP
ARGH FUCK KILL
DEAD
YOU KNOW BOBBY, YOU SHOULDNT BE SO DISMISSIVE OF OTHER PEOPLES VIEW POINTS -
AH SHUT THE FUCK UP, YOU FRUIT BAT

TO ME, PUNK WAS ART SCHOOL DROPOUT NYC HEROIN ADDICT'S WITH COCKNEY + REGGAE POLITICS THROWN in
SKINHEAD
SUIT & TIE EURO-DRUGGIE APOCOLYPTIC TYPE CULTURE
HXC WAS COOL, BUT THE TO ALMO FRA ANDT ACCESS ABLE...
WHILE THE MESSAGE OF UNITY MADE SENSE, IT WAS ANATHEMA TO GLUEHEAD PUNKS LIKE US. WE AWAITED THE INFLUX OF TOURISTS AS OUR ELITISM ERODED, WHAT MEANT INCLUSIVENESS TO SOME WAS LOWERING THE BAR TO US
OOOO...
ART FAG
THEN GET THE FUCK OUTTA HERE, MADNESS
I GOT HIM, FELLA'S - C'MON, LET'S GO (SIGH)
FUCKING WHINER!
FAGNESS
LEMME GO, BIG FOOT!
SKA
ANYWAYS...
MAN, I'M SICK OF THIS FUCKING LITTLE KID MUSIC
THE FUGS
UN-COOL!
SHOVE!
YOU SHOULD BE COOLER THAN THAT
THOSE GUYS ARE MY FRIENDS... YOU ALMOST GOT YOUR BUTT KICK
I WAS GONNA FUCK THEM UP!
IT'S NOT THE POINT, BOBBY - IT'S JUST...
SHE'S HOT
IT JUST THAT - YOUR A COOL CAT - YOU DONT HAVE TO PUT UP THIS BIG 'FRONT'
I KNOW THAT LOOK...
WHAT TH'?
C'MON, BABY - LET'S MAKE OUT!
YOU...
JERK!
BOOT!
GRAB!
LATER...
THAT ASSHOLE! HE STOLE ALL MY REKKIDS! AND ZINES TOO!
THAT WAS THE FIRST ISSUE OF MAXIMUM I EVER READ...

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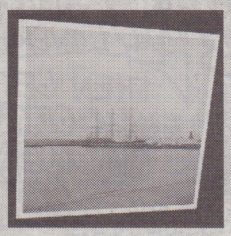

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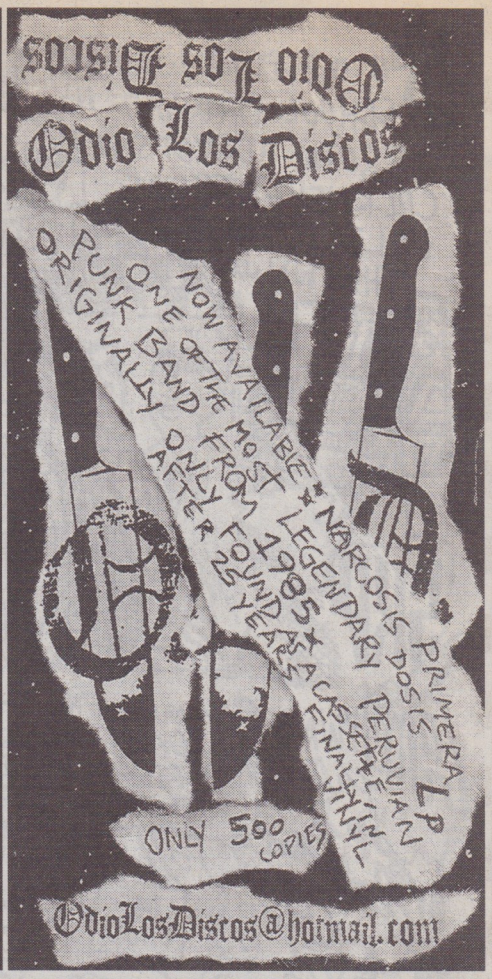

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ED LUCE

When I first read Wuvable Oaf, it turned me on my head. It got me excited and immediately seemed like an important, very needed project, melding together worlds that seem sometimes so far apart creating a "post-gay/post-bear" work steeped in punk, and DIY culture. Without underestimating readers, Wuvable Oaf highlights that subcultures and cultures have more in common than one may think in this creative, funny, smart and wonderfully drawn comic. Along with collaborator (and former MRR shitworker) Matt Wobensmith, who MRR readers know from various projects, notably the Outpunk movement and his amazing zine archive/store Goteblüd, Ed Luce puts ink to paper and gives us a much-needed laugh. DIY and punk as fuck… we present Ed Luce.
Intro by Mariam Bastani, Interview by Janelle Hessig

MRR: The first time I was exposed to Oaf was at the Alternative Press Expo in 2008. Had you made comics before then?
I had been my college newspaper's comics page editor, so I was producing a few weekly strips back then...mostly to fill space. The majority of those were one-and-done, single story cartoons, so I still consider *Wuvable Oaf* to be my first proper comic work. Prior to that I was a painter and art professor for the better part of a decade, so I spent most of my time telling students to stop drawing comics. To this day I still get messages from some of them saying "What the fuck...?"

MRR: Is the Oaf character based on a specific person? How much of it is autobiographical?
I would say that Oaf's personality is largely based on a facet of my own...the kind and generous side, anyway. Physically, he's a composite of several friends with a dash of Kerry King (from Slayer) thrown in for good measure.

MRR: How did the Ejaculoid 7" come to be? Who recorded it and who is in the band? Are there plans for a second 7" or a full-length?
Not long after the #0 issue was released, my collaborator Matt Wobensmith and I began to talk about how awesome it would be to give voice to EJA©ULOID. He used to produce singles on his Outpunk label and put out a number of homo-hop albums some years back, so he had quite a bit of experience in the recording studio and a good number of connections to local musicians. When he mentioned Martin Sorrondeguy and Scott Moore from Limp Wrist / Needles were interested in recording as EJA©ULOID, I was completely floored. I first read about Limp Wrist in the pages of *MRR* and it was something of a revelation for me. In retrospect, the voice of the Eiffel character could only have been Martin; the music they've been producing is very much in line with my vision for the band. I couldn't be more excited to have inspired these songs.

I just got the final mix for "Sleep Apnea", which will be included with the Special Edition version of Wuvable Oaf #3, along with two other songs. I do hope to one day have enough material to put out a full LP collection, with remixes on the B-side. It's a bit difficult, since EJA©ULOID's songs rarely cross the minute mark!

MRR: I lied about APE being my first exposure to Oaf. My first exposure was seeing an Oaf shirt at Bad Skull (the black one where he's wearing pink manties with a kitty on them). The Oaf character design is clean and totally iconic and lends itself well to the vast array of merchandise you've created—mugs, shirts, records, etc. Do you have a background in design or advertising? Have you had experience in making merchandise before this? What other merchandising plans do you have? What are you going to do if Coca Cola comes calling to try and make Oaf their bitch mascot?
Thanks...it's funny, I was set to be a graphic designer but when I found out how rigorous and disciplined you have to be, I opted for illustration instead. In reality, the Oaf design you're talking about was lifted directly from this paper doll drawing I did. I had no idea it was going to have a life of its own when we did that first run of shirts. I think it was Matt that insisted we use the graphic, almost in a viral manner, to get the Oaf's image out there a full year before the first comic was released. Prior to that the only merchandise experience I had was as an avid fan and collector, so everything we do comes from our own personal drive to own some cool.

We're always throwing around ideas for what Oaf merchandise should come next. I tend to favor items that seem like they actually come from this fake cartoon world we're creating, like the records, band posters and signature guitar picks. Without giving too much away, we're planning some more shirts (one of which will debut at the Alternative Press Expo 2010,) more records by different bands in the comic and...scented trading cards for each of the main characters. Yes, I'm totally ripping off John Water's Odor-O-Rama.

There's already been some interest in the Oaf's image being used to sell someone else's product. A local porn company wanted him painted on a backdrop wall for one of their videos. And a sex-toy manufacturer contacted me about making an Oaf-sized dildo, believe it or not. Ultimately, I passed on both; I'm hesitant to objectify the character to that degree!

MRR: What bands does Oaf listen to?
Oaf has a wide variety of musical interests, including early punk and hardcore, various forms of metal, what he'd call "sexy lady" hip hop/R&B...and of course, he's eternally devoted to Morrissey and The Smiths. I think a short list would read: Egyptian Lover, J. J. Fad, L'Trimm, Bytches With Problems, Kelis, Ciara, Omarion, Sissy Nobby, Big Freedia, Vanity 6, Gary Numan, Klaus Nomi, ESG, Cradle Of Filth, Cattle Decapitation, Entombed, Enslaved, Dimmu Borgir, Meshuggah, Pig Destroyer, Converge, Agoraphobic Nosebleed, Nasum, Neuraxis, Venom, Possessed, The Obsessed, At The Gates, Carcass, Celtic Frost, Voivod, Pantera, Slayer, Eyehategod, Khanate, Mastodon, Necrophagist...and can't forget EJA©ULOID.

MRR: Oaf has a hell of a lot of cats and does a lot of man business. What does his apartment smell like?
Ha...yeah, believe it or not, I've thought about the cat factor...and come up with a solution, which will hopefully be worked into an upcoming mini-comic about the kitties. I had two cats at one point in my life and it was a constant battle against litter box stench. Since this is a comic, I came up with a completely unrealistic way for Oaf to deal with this...and it'll be revealed soon. He certainly doesn't want to jeopardize all that man bidness.

MRR: Will Oaf ever get a steady boyfriend? Or will he be more like a Charlie Brown figure—consistently getting the football yanked away from him?
I think Oaf is like many of us in the sense that we all have idiosyncrasies we think make us undesirable, or at the very least difficult to be with. Oaf's are just exaggerated for comedic effect in his "Worst Date Ever" stories. He's definitely been waiting for someone to come along and accept him for who and what he is.

You'll know by the end of *Oaf* #3 if he's going to get together with his current love interest Eiffel. We'll see...I mean, as faithful readers can attest, Eiffel is kind of a total asshole and Oaf is super-sensitive, so who knows if they can go the distance?

MRR: What comics are you inspired by?
I'm a huge fan of Osama Tezuka (creator of Black Jack and Astro Boy), Dame Darcy (*Meatcake*), Edward Gorey and 19th century illustrator Aubrey Beardsley. Bil Sherman's Wanky Comics are something of a spiritual cousin to the Oaf, albeit a sluttier, more deranged version... and I love them for that. I have the utmost respect for Los Hermanos Hernandez too.

MRR: How did you start collaborating with Matt Wobensmith? What is his role in the Wuvable Oaf empire?
Matt and I had become good friends long before the original Oaf paper doll drawing; he was definitely one of the first people to see that image and get excited about it. In fact, he bought it before it even hit the walls of the exhibition I'd created it for. His desire to know more about the character spurred me to construct a narrative around him and comics seemed to be the natural way to tell that story. Matt has been there every step of the way since, as an editor and contributor, but he's also helped finance a good chunk of the project too. The Oaf would not exist in his current form without him...or my devoted partner Mark, for that matter.

Up til this point, Matt has been the writer of a few short stories, including the one in this issue of *MRR*, but I'm very excited to announce he'll be taking on full writing duties with *Wuvable Oaf* #4, to tell the story of the Smusherrrr.

MRR: Will you and Matt continue to publish Oaf independently or are you shopping around for publishers?
From the start, we knew a comic about a big, hairy queer cat fancier/ dollmaker was not going to garner much interest from publishers, so we've been releasing things independently thus far. However, despite any formal pitching on our part, we have a handful of parties interested in publishing a collected bound edition of issues #1-3, so we'll be making a serious decision about that early in the new year.

MRR: What part do you play in (the SF zine store) Goteblud? This is obviously a labor of love, does it seem like the business will be able to sustain itself?
Matt actually lifted the name "Goteblüd" from my design for the comic's publishing logo, so now we say Goteblüd the Store prints an in-house comic called *Wuvable Oaf*. I maintain a little Oaf Boutique in the corner of the shop, but Goteblüd has really become Matt's baby of late. I enjoy drawing there some weekends but it's become so popular I can't get much work done anymore!

Both the store and comic have become self-sustaining...even lucrative...so I think it's a matter of whether we fatigue or get bored with what we're doing.

MRR: Matt laughed at me when I called your comic a bear comic and said that you guys are post-bear. Could you elaborate on this?
I think we're both pretty adamant that the Oaf is not "owned" by any one group or community. It's very true he's been adopted by Bears and their ilk; they totally get where these characters are coming from. In many ways the comic is a valentine to those guys and we will always appreciate their support. But one of the things we've been careful about is our use of language in the comic. We don't use the term "bear" or even "gay" or "queer" in the dialogue. That's mainly because I don't know anyone who announces their sexuality every time they walk into a room. There's just no need; anyone that picks up the book can pretty much figure out what's going on at a glance. I really didn't see the need to talk down to readers...or do any kind of labeling for them. And I genuinely believe that opens the story up for anyone to read...in fact, I'm constantly amazed by how varied the fan base has grown. On a certain level, I think *Wuvable Oaf* has become a go-to "queer" comic for straight folks. So in that sense I'd call it both "post-Bear" and "post-Gay."

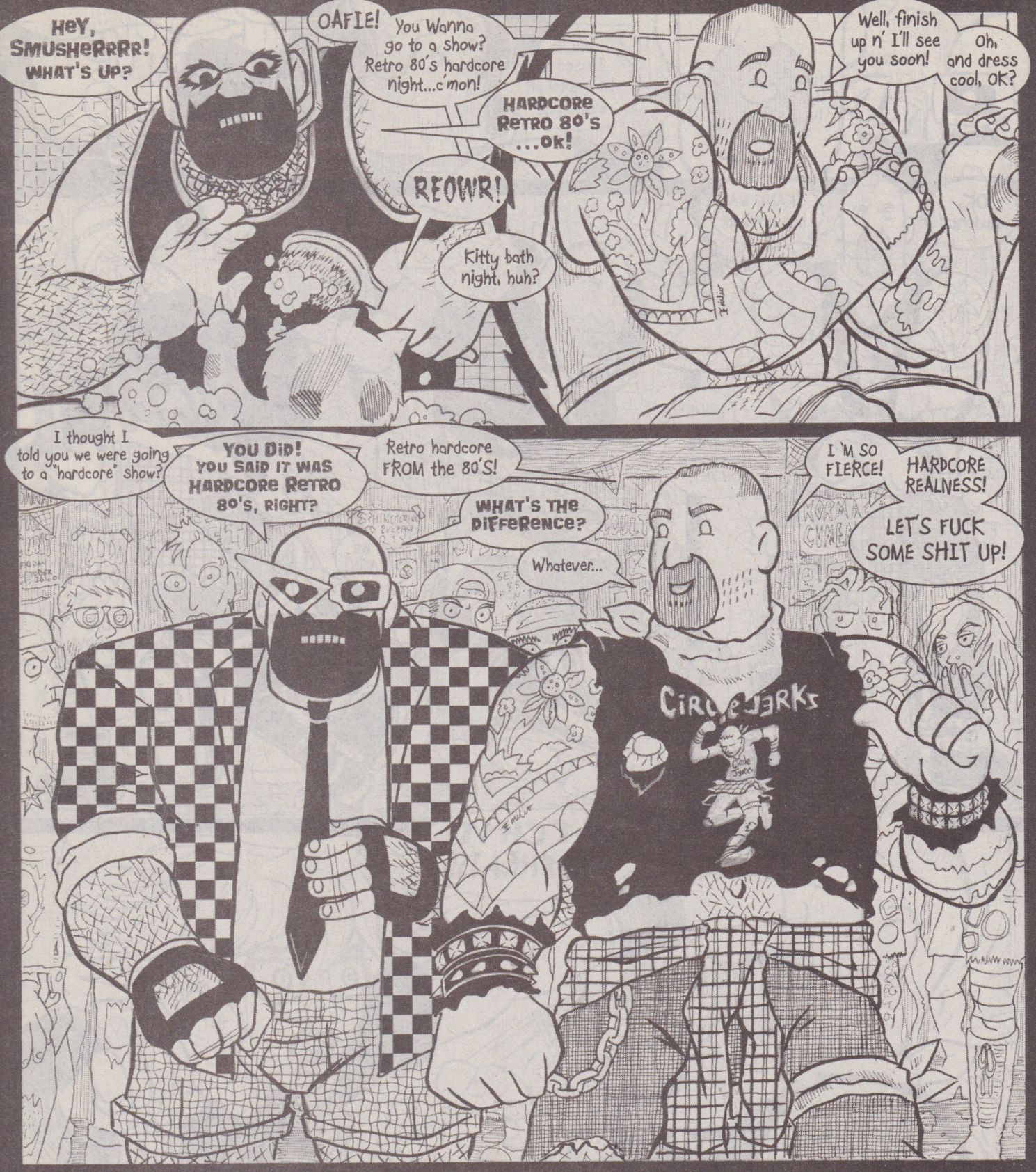
MRR: Does Oaf have fans in the gay community that aren't comics fans, whose sole allegiance is to Oaf?
Definitely...in fact, I can think of at least one diehard fan in particular who always reminds me Oaf is the only comic he collects. And that's very exciting for me, that there's an enthusiasm around identifying with this character that goes beyond the genre I've chosen. I can't wait to put out a proper book and have the Oaf staring back at people in larger bookstores.

MRR: Will there ever be a female character in *Wuvable Oaf*?
We've introduced a few lady characters already, Dorissey (in issue #0) and Sundae Goyle (in issue #2)...but space and story constraints have caused them to become secondary players at the moment. Matt has a much larger role for the all-female music group Muff n' Top Grrrlz (from #2) in his story arc, so I'm very much looking forward to finally giving these ladies the attention they deserve.

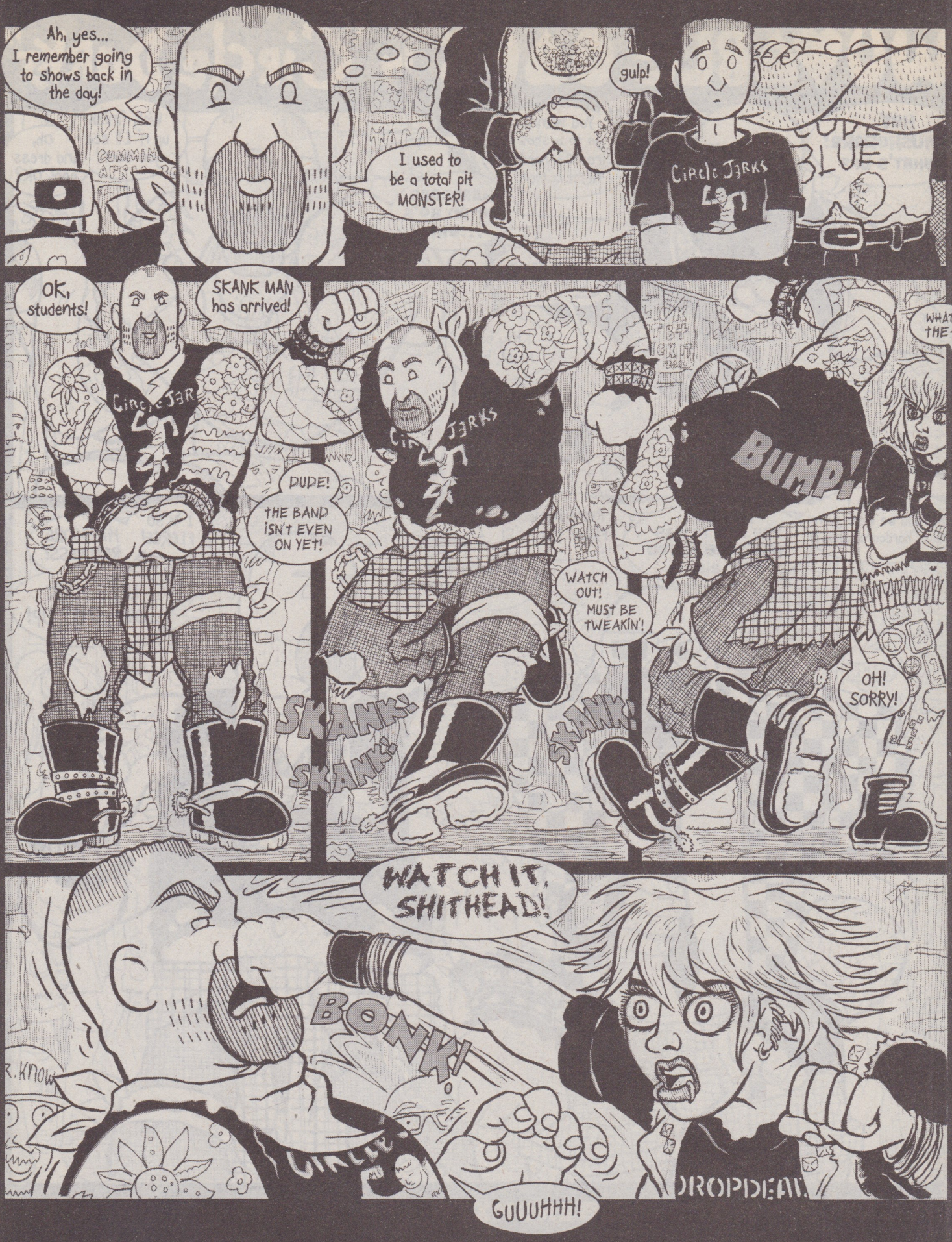
MRR: What does the future hold in store for Oaf?
More comics, more shirts, more everything! As the Oaf's popularity expands, so will our presence at stores and conventions. I'm really keen on establishing him more overseas. We've barely scratched the surface in so many countries, particularly Japan where there're already quite a few bear manga comics being produced.

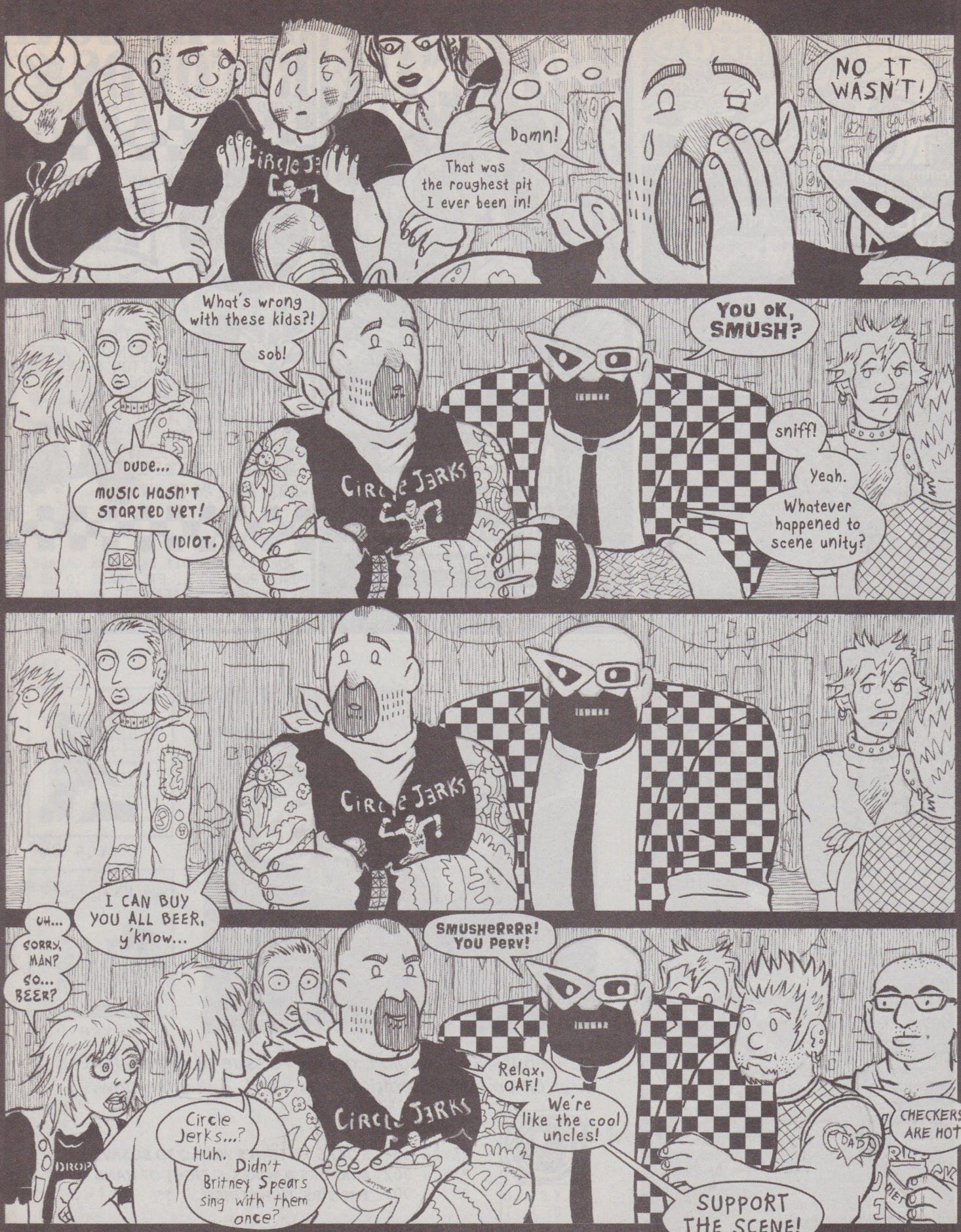
A hard furry fist cast in marshmallow

WUVABLE OAFS in "Circle Dorks"



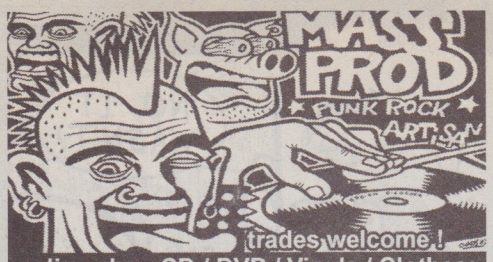
STORY BY MATT WOBENSMITH ART BY ED LUCE


Ah, yes... I remember going to shows back in the day!
I used to be a total pit MONSTER!
gulp!
Circle Jerks
BLUE
OK, students!
SKANK MAN has arrived!
DUDE! THE BAND ISN'T EVEN ON YET!
SKANK
SKANK
WATCH OUT! MUST BE TWEAKIN'!
SKANK
BUMP!
WHAT THE--
OH! SORRY!
WATCH IT, SHITHEAD!
BONK!
GUUUHHH!
DROPDEAD



FOR MORE OAF VISIT WUVABLEOAF.COM

THE END!



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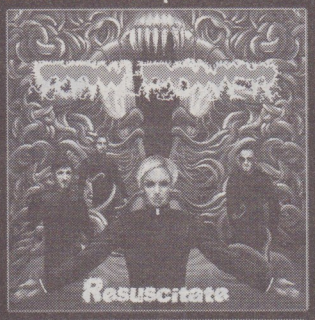

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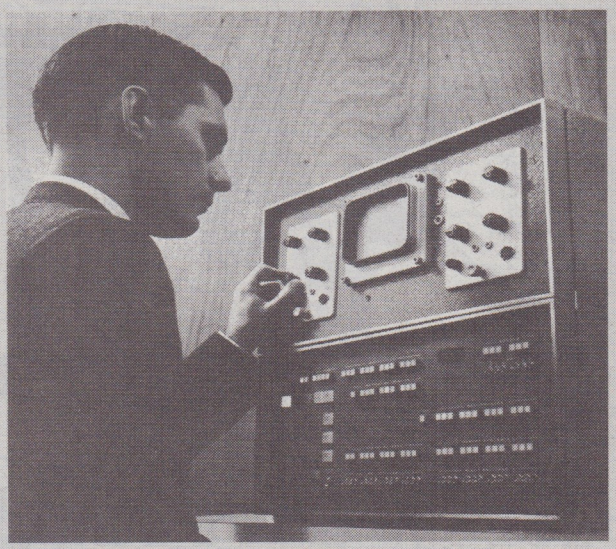

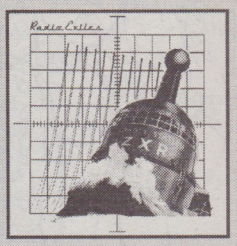

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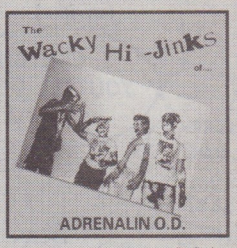

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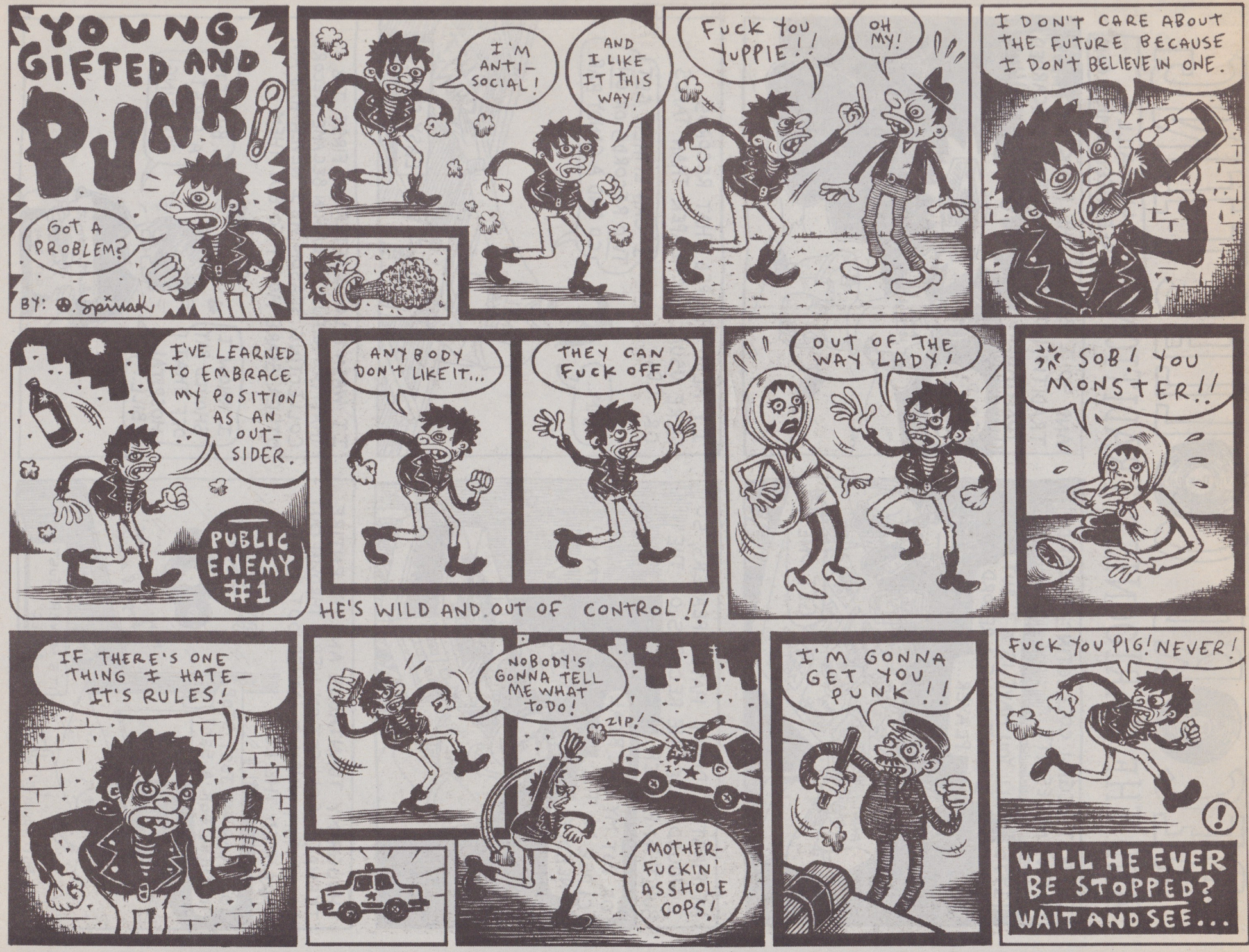
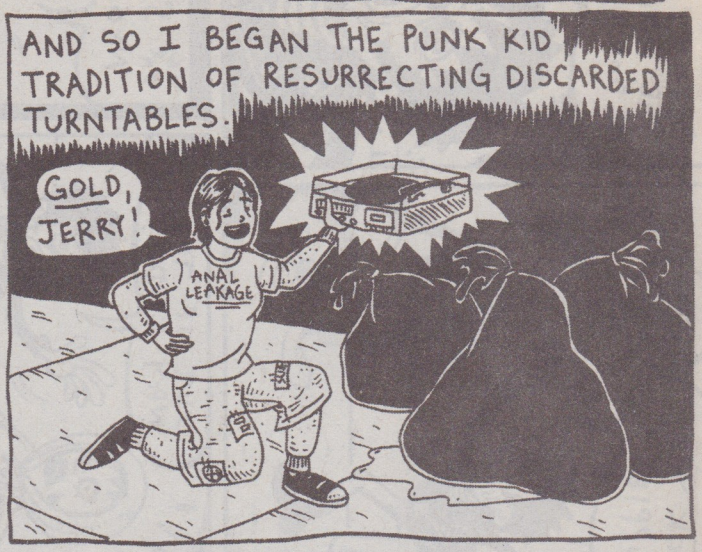
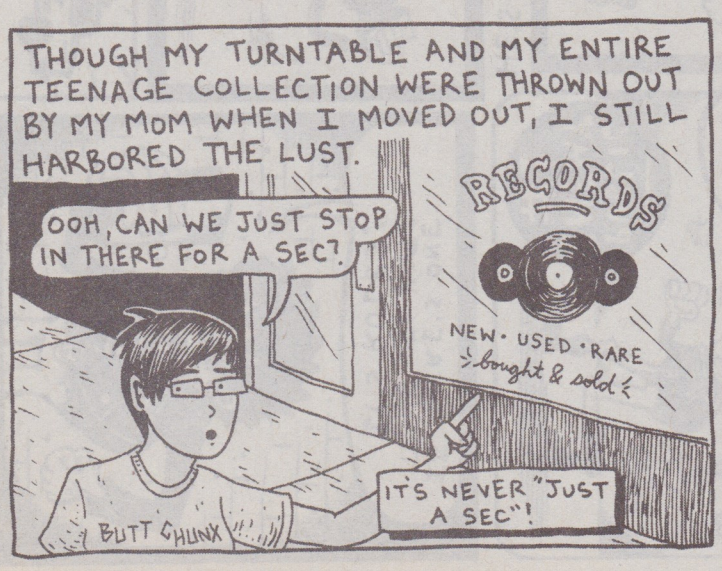

YOUNG GIFTED AND PUNK
GOT A PROBLEM?
BY: ©. Spiwak
I'M ANTI-SOCIAL!
AND I LIKE IT THIS WAY!
FUCK YOU YUPPIE!!
OH MY!
I DON'T CARE ABOUT THE FUTURE BECAUSE I DON'T BELIEVE IN ONE.
I'VE LEARNED TO EMBRACE MY POSITION AS AN OUT-SIDER.
PUBLIC ENEMY #1
ANYBODY DON'T LIKE IT...
THEY CAN FUCK OFF!
HE'S WILD AND OUT OF CONTROL!!
OUT OF THE WAY LADY!
SOB! YOU MONSTER!!
IF THERE'S ONE THING I HATE— IT'S RULES!
NOBODY'S GONNA TELL ME WHAT TO DO!
ZIP!
MOTHER-FUCKIN' ASSHOLE COPS!
I'M GONNA GET YOU PUNK!!
FUCK YOU PIG! NEVER!
!
WILL HE EVER BE STOPPED?
WAIT AND SEE...

RECORD COLLECTING

AND THE CARTOONIST TRADITION

BY LIZ BAILLIE
FREEWHEELCOMICS.COM



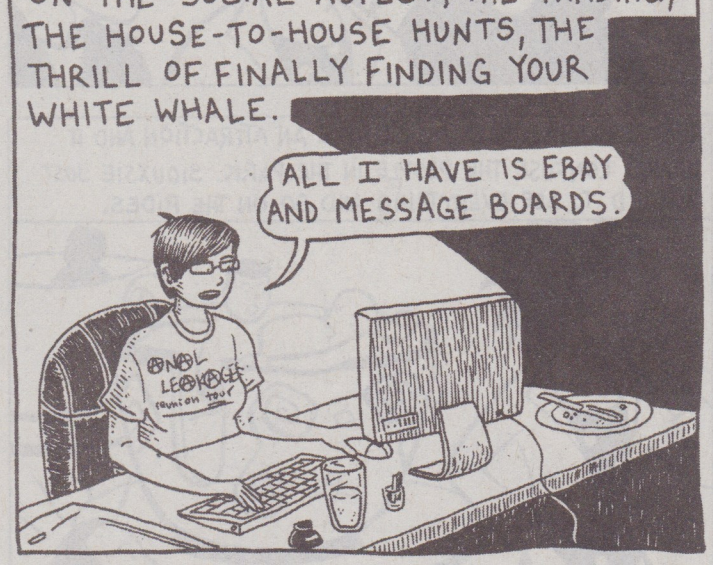


I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS ABOUT RECORDS. THE IMPOSING LARGENESS, THE TACTILE QUALITY OF THE NEEDLE IN THE GROOVE, THE FEELING OF BEING CONNECTED TO ONE OF THE EARLIEST METHODS OF RECORDING SOUND...

I NEVER HAD ANY FRIENDS WHO WERE COLLECTORS AND LAMENTED BEING BORN TOO LATE TO ENJOY THE COLLECTOR CULTURE THAT BROUGHT R.CRUMB AND HARVEY PEKAR TOGETHER.

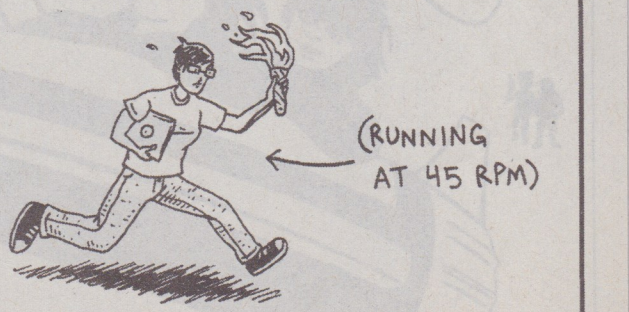
REGARDLESS OF WHAT ONE COLLECTS, YOU'D HEAR SIMILAR WORDS COMING OUT OF OUR MOUTHS...

I FEEL LIKE I REALLY MISSED OUT ON THE SOCIAL ASPECT; THE TRADING, THE HOUSE-TO-HOUSE HUNTS, THE THRILL OF FINALLY FINDING YOUR WHITE WHALE.



EVEN THOUGH I IMAGINE PEKAR AND CRUMB WOULD SCOFF AT MY ATTENTION TO SUCH SUPERFICIAL DETAILS IN MY COLLECTING HABITS...

STILL, I ENJOY FEELING LIKE PART OF THE UNDERGROUND/ALTERNATIVE COMICS TRADITION BY CARRYING ON THE "CARTOONIST RECORD COLLECTOR" TORCH!

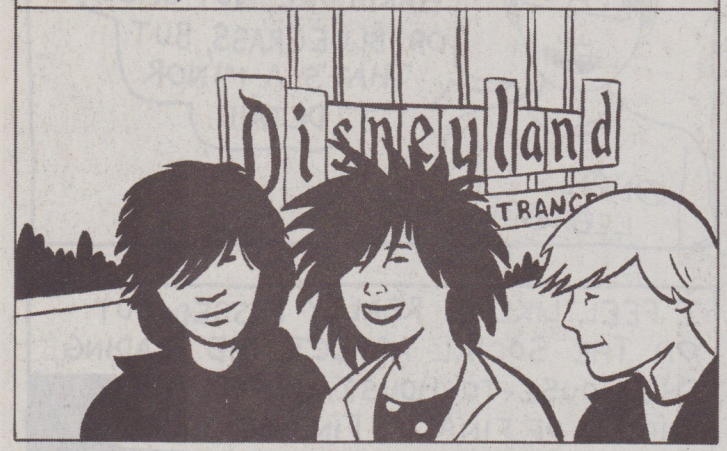


SHE LOOKED LIKE AN ATTRACTION

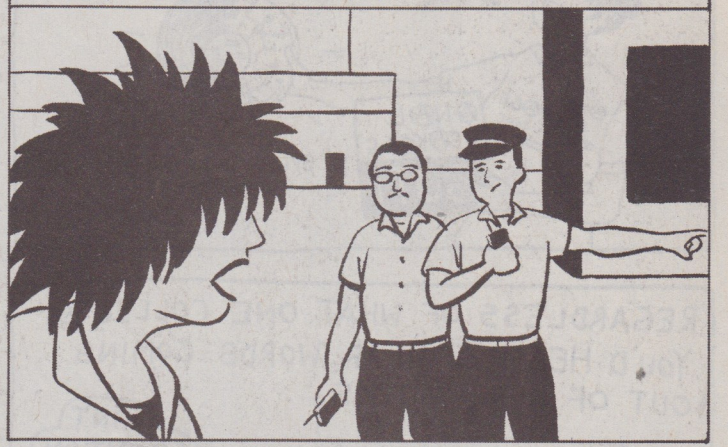
AS TOLD BY DONNA SANTISI
WWW.SANTISIPHOTOGRAPHY.COM

ART BY CRAIG BOSTICK
WWW.AQUABOY.NET

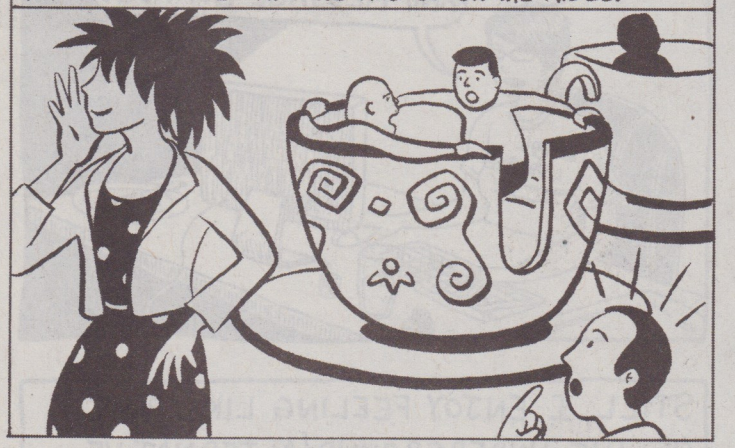
1981: SIOUXSIE SIOUX WAS IN LA AND WANTED TO GO TO DISNEYLAND. IT WAS SIOUX, KID CONGO, MARCY BLAUSTEIN, RANDY KAYE, AND ME.



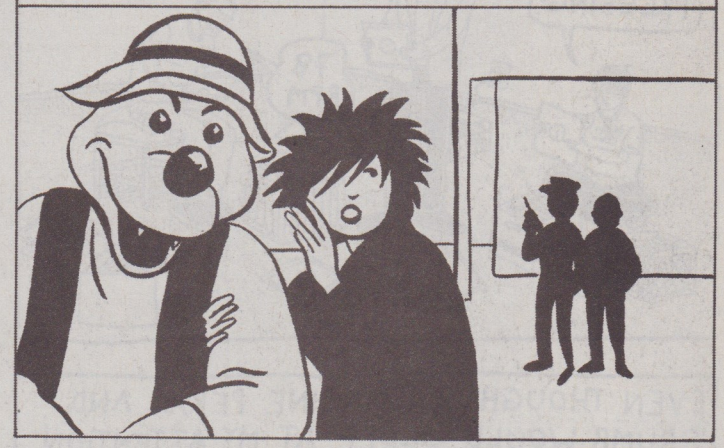
SIOUX WAS REALLY EXCITED WHEN WE GOT THERE BUT ONCE WE WERE ON MAIN STREET, TWO SECURITY MEN CAME UP TO HER AND TOLD HER SHE HAD TO LEAVE.



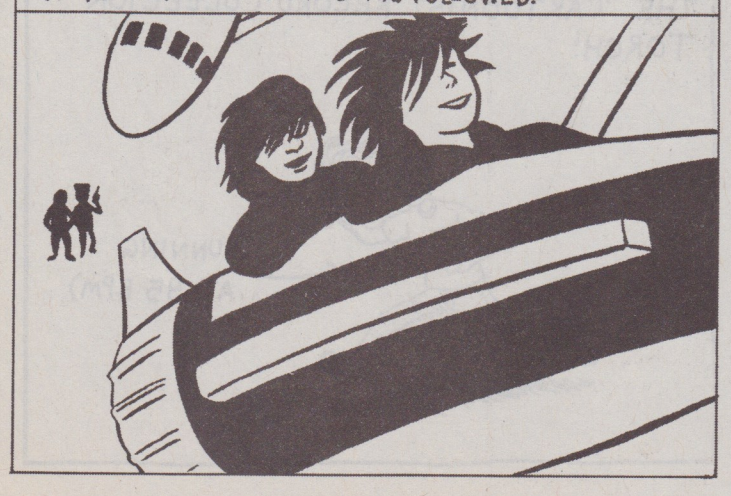
THEY SAID THAT SHE LOOKED LIKE AN ATTRACTION AND IT WOULD CONFUSE THE PEOPLE IN THE PARK. SIOUXSIE JUST WANTED TO SEE EVERYTHING AND GO ON THE RIDES.



THEY FINALLY AGREED THAT SIOUX COULD STAY IF SHE COVERED UP WITH RANDY'S RAINCOAT, BUT WE WERE FOLLOWED ALL DAY BY SEVERAL SECURITY PEOPLE WITH WALKIE TALKIES.



SIOUXSIE WENT ON ALL THE RIDES. WE WERE HAVING SO MUCH FUN WE FORGOT WE WERE BEING FOLLOWED.



BEFORE WE TOOK A TRAM TO THE CAR, SIOUXSIE BOUGHT SEVERAL SOUVENIRS AND POSTCARDS FOR HER FAMILY. WE WERE TIRED BUT VERY HAPPY.

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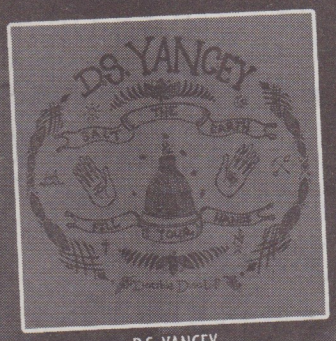

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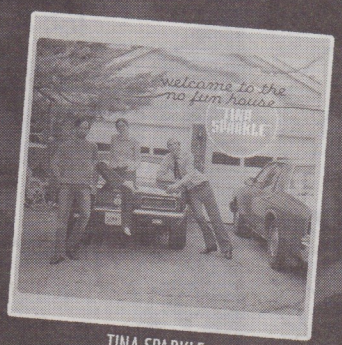
RIYL: Chuck Ragan, Tim Barry, Ted Leo



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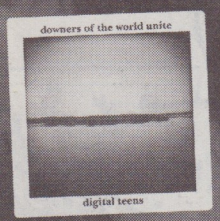
RIYL: The Pretenders, Rainer Maria



DOWNERS OF THE WORLD UNITE
DIGITAL TEENS / NOTHING LOOKS GOOD digital
RIYL: Every Time I Die, Deftones, The Bronx

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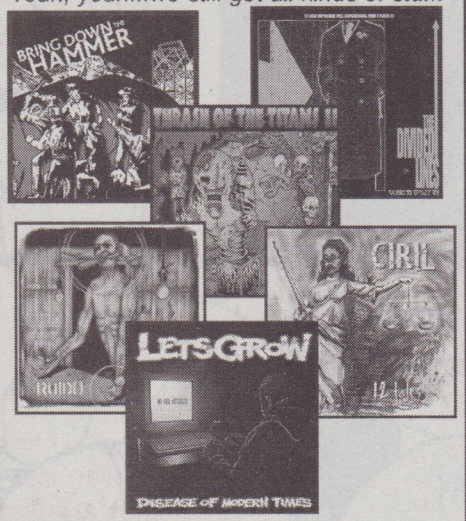

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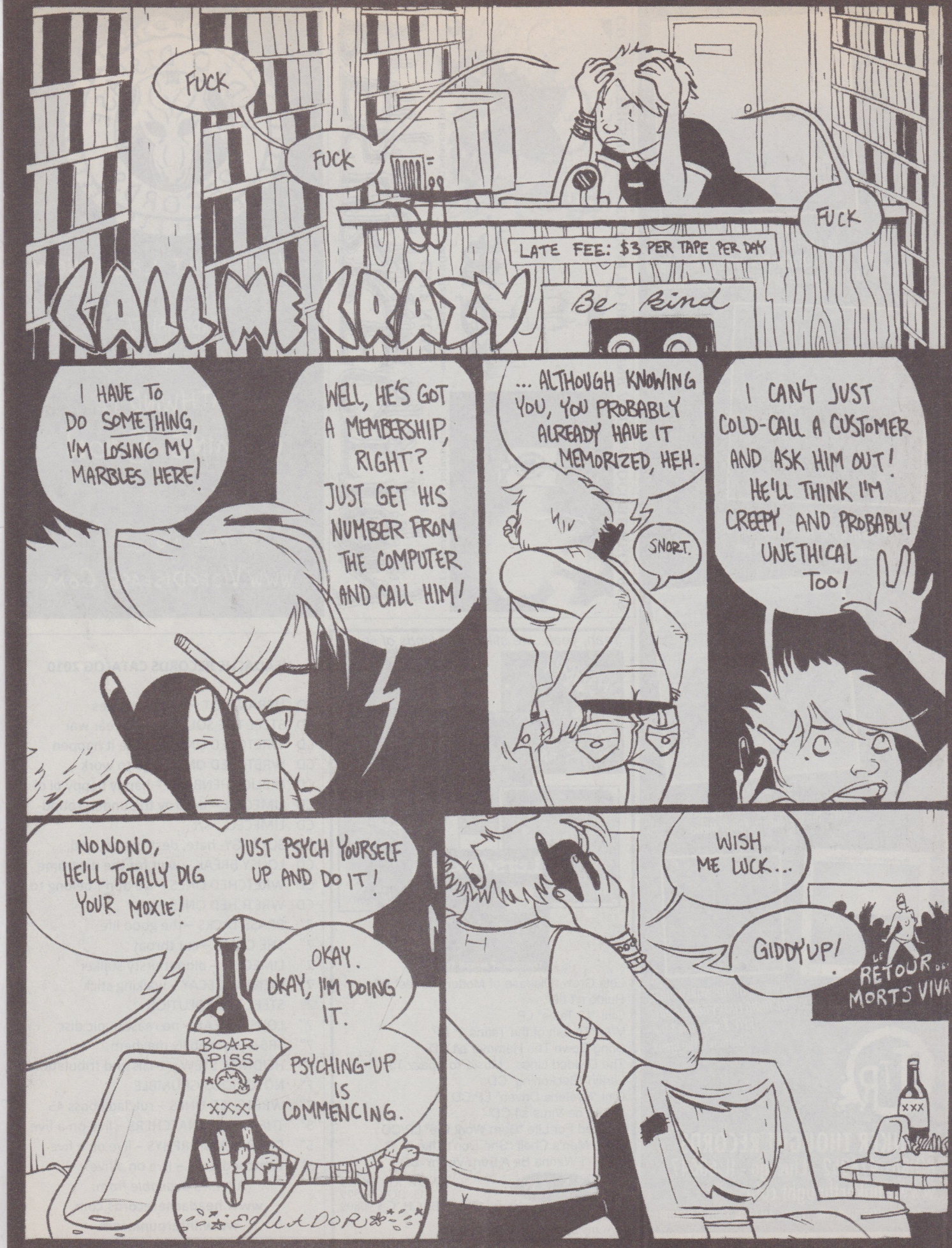
FUCK
FUCK
FUCK
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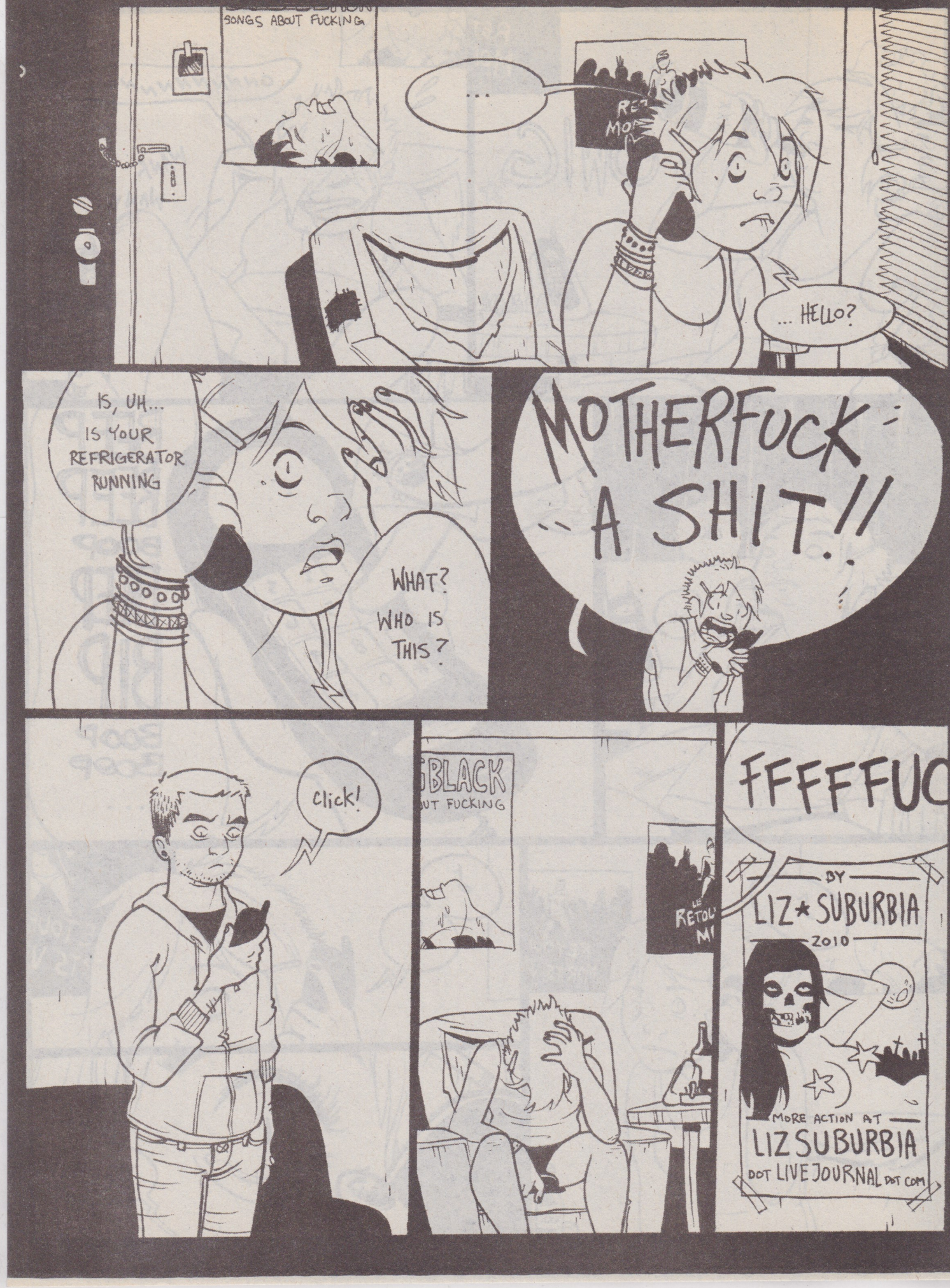
Be Kind
CALL ME CRAZY
I HAVE TO DO SOMETHING, I'M LOSING MY MARBLES HERE!
WELL, HE'S GOT A MEMBERSHIP, RIGHT? JUST GET HIS NUMBER FROM THE COMPUTER AND CALL HIM!
... ALTHOUGH KNOWING YOU, YOU PROBABLY ALREADY HAVE IT MEMORIZED, HEH.
SNORT.
I CAN'T JUST COLD-CALL A CUSTOMER AND ASK HIM OUT! HE'LL THINK I'M CREEPY, AND PROBABLY UNETHICAL TOO!
NONONO, HE'LL TOTALLY DIG YOUR MOXIE!
JUST PSYCH YOURSELF UP AND DO IT!
OKAY. OKAY, I'M DOING IT.
PSYCHING-UP IS COMMENCING.
BOAR PISS
XXX
ECUADOR
WISH ME LUCK...
GIDDY'UP!
LE RETOUR DES MORTS VIVA
XXX

SWIG
XXX
GNNNNNNNNNN
WANK
WANK
XXX
BEEP
BEEP
BOOP
BEEP
BIP
BOOP
BOOP
...
OK
OK
RETOUR
MORTS V
YEAH?


SONGS ABOUT FUCKING
...
... HELLO?
IS, UH... IS YOUR REFRIGERATOR RUNNING
WHAT? WHO IS THIS?
MOTHERFUCK A SHIT!!
click!
BLACK
UT FUCKING
FFFFFUC
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HELL IS FOR HEROES

MY EARS STILL RINGING FROM THE PREVIOUS NIGHT WHEN I "BORROWED" MY DAD'S CAR TO CATCH RICHARD HELL AND THE VOIDOIDS AT CBGB'S, I PLOPPED DOWN TO BEGIN MY HIGH SCHOOL ART CLASS. IT WAS 1977 AND **PUNK ROCK** RULED MY WORLD.

A TRUE STORY

TODAY'S ASSIGNMENT IS TO CREATE A CERAMIC SCULPTURE.

CLAY.

TO ME, RICHARD HELL EMBODIED THE PUNK AESTHETIC TO ITS CORE: ANGRY, VULNERABLE, SHOCKING, AND ABSURD. I HAD A VAGUE LONGING TO BE AN ARTIST AND TO MAKE A CONNECTION WITH SOMETHING BIGGER THAN MYSELF.

I'LL MAKE A STATUETTE OF RICHARD HELL.

THE FIGURINE SAT ON MY BOOKSHELF UNTIL I GOT THE COURAGE TO PRESENT IT TO HELL HIMSELF AFTER ANOTHER CBGB'S GIG. I FELT SILLY AND NERVOUS.

HI, UM... CAN I SEE RICHARD? I MADE THIS THING FOR HIM.

UH, YEAH. SURE.

DIE KIDS.

CBGB

RICHARD WAS ALL BY HIMSELF BACKSTAGE. HE LOOKED LIKE HE WAS GOING THROUGH A HEAVY ARTISTIC MOMENT.

DEAD BOYS

UH, RICHARD?

MUH?

I FELT REALLY AWKWARD BEING THERE UNTIL I GAVE HIM THE SCULPTURE. HE SEEMED GENUINELY TOUCHED.

SO, I, UM... YOU KNOW, WELL... UM.

THIS IS AMAZING!

WAITING FOR MY TRAIN BACK TO NEW JERSEY AMONG THE PUKE AND MADNESS OF PENN STATION AT 3 A.M., I READ AND REREAD THE NOTE HELL WROTE TO ME ON HIS RECORD.

TO TRAIN

For Kaz who immortalized us both at such tender ages

YARG

YA PUNK!

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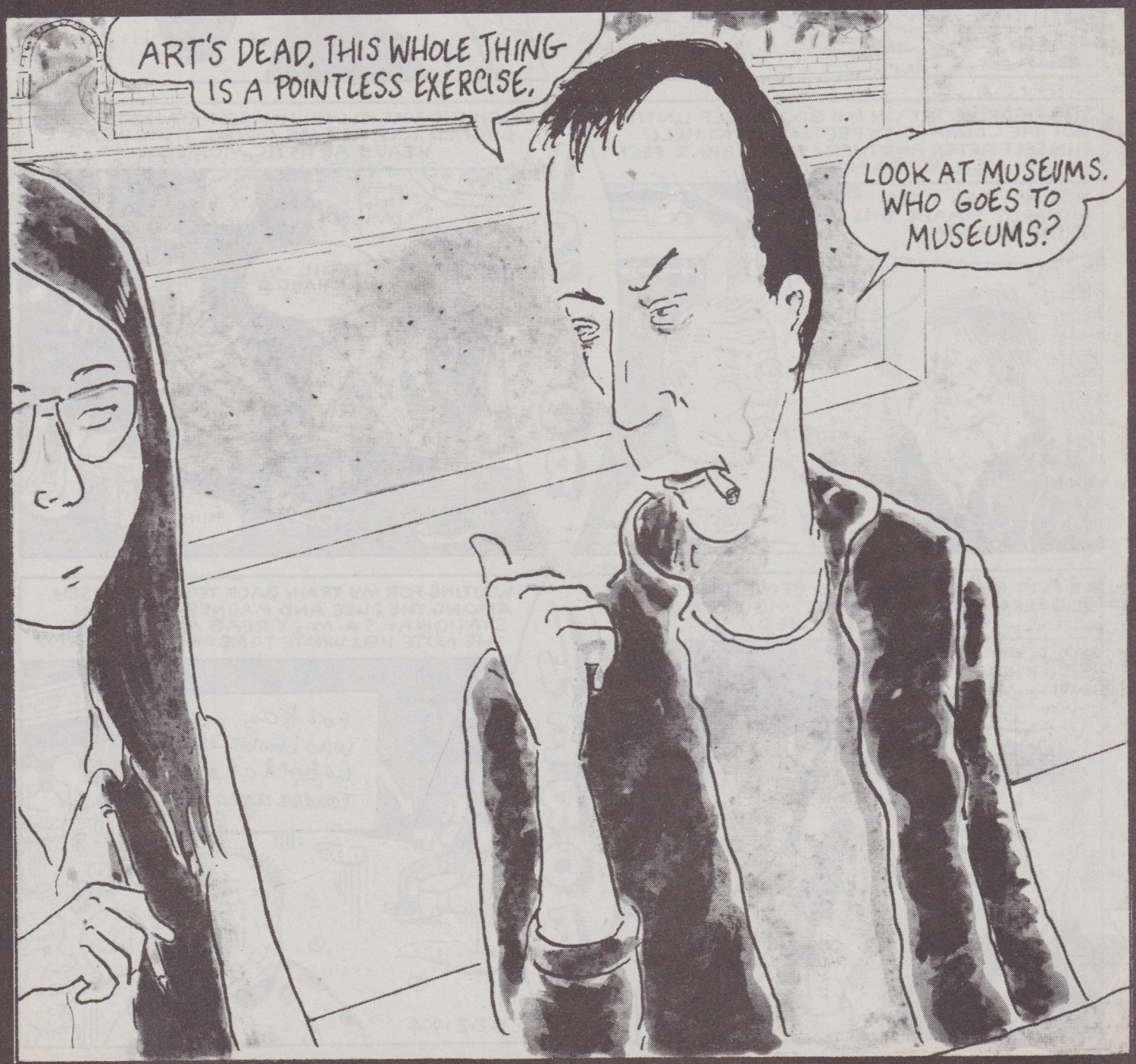
Mimi Pond


ART'S DEAD. THIS WHOLE THING IS A POINTLESS EXERCISE.
LOOK AT MUSEUMS. WHO GOES TO MUSEUMS?

Interview by Janelle Hessig

MRR: Your upcoming graphic novel, Over Easy, centers around the period where you were going to art school in Oakland in 1978, right at the dawn of punk (I love when you compare Ted Falconi to the Fonz! HAW!) Unfortunately, the excerpts that are posted on your website stop right as you are becoming clued in to this new scene. Whatta cliffhanger! Did you start a band? Drop out of school? Did you go to shows in the Bay Area around this time?

I didn't join a band! I did the next best thing: I became a waitress. I will tell you I am the least musical person I know. But that story about Ted really *did* happen. If he denies it, who was doing all the drugs, him or me? I went to a few shows in the bay area back then. I hope you're not disappointed to learn that I was not a club kid. Even in my youth I never had the stamina to stay up late. It just put me in a bad mood. I'll tell you what I remember, and it isn't really the punk shows. It was seeing James Brown and Ray Charles (separately) perform at a small club on Broadway (can't remember the name) in North Beach. I also saw Elvis Costello, (my rock'n'roll husband) at the Warfield, I believe around New Year's Eve of 1980.

MRR: Who were some of your favorite bands of the '70s/'80s punk era? Who are some of your favorite bands now?

This will sound entirely square, but Bruce Springsteen got me through four years of waitressing. I don't know why he gets dissed by hipsters now, and why Journey gets glorified for being so-cheesy-they're-hip instead. Journey is the WORST. Likewise Bon Jovi and Aerosmith, ugh. At the restaurant where I worked, the radio was pumping out top forty all day long, and the line cooks, even the punk ones, loved them some Journey and Rush and all that crap. Like I said, Elvis Costello is and always will be my rock'n'roll husband. Bruce had that message that was important for anyone young and struggling then—get out while you still can, don't get stuck working a shit job forever, go live your dreams—which only sound cheesy if you're not stuck in a shit job, not if you are desperate to get out and go do what you really want to do. And Elvis helped you stay disgusted enough to remember why you wanted to get the hell out. And Jonathan Richman gave you a sense of humor about it all. And the Ramones, of course. X, of course. Pretenders, Ian Dury, Iggy and the Stooges, Blondie. Honestly what I liked about the punk scene was less the music and the drugs and the staying out late, and more the energy and the fashion sense, the DIY thing that came from having no money and a lot of imagination. The other thing I loved about it was the big fuck you to the whole hippie thing, which was just so much moldy bong water at that point. What I didn't like and what I still don't like about club scenes is the pathetic jockeying for position. It's so high school- who's with the band, who knows someone in the band, who's dating a band member, who's doing an interview with the band after the show. It's so boring. I grew up in a house full of Broadway show soundtracks, so I have Tin Pan Alley encoded in my DNA. Love Cole Porter, Irving Berlin, Gershwins, Rodgers and Hammerstein, Rodgers and Hart, Johnny Mercer, on and on- so I appreciate a well-crafted song. I have to stand up like Little Richard did at the Grammies and say I WAS THE FIRST ONE of my generation to rediscover "lounge music." Well, besides Tom Waits, of course. I was buying Sinatra and June Christy and Ella Fitzgerald and Bob Dorough and Mose Allison albums at the thrift store back then, no one else was. I was on that shit long before anyone else picked it up! I would kill to be able to write a perfect three-minute pop song and I cannot sing a note and have no musical sense. Next lifetime. And who do I like now? I can't even quite tell you. After a certain age, if you have kids, you try to keep up with music and there is such an onslaught now with the internet that you just throw yourself down in the aisles of the record store and scream I GIVE UP! I'M SQUARE! I'M OVER IT! KILL ME NOW!

MRR: Some of your comics deal with the quandry of how to gracefully become an older punk lady. Aside from freaks of nature like Pleasant Gehman or Elvira, the rest of us have some physical and emotional lifestyle changes to contend with at a certain point. I have to respect Jaime Hernandez for supplying one of the only roadmaps for older punks by letting Maggie and Hopey get older in a real and dignified way in *Love & Rockets*. Of course, this is probably easier with fictionalized characters than when you're writing autobio. Have you discovered any new secrets since making your *Aging Hipster* comic? What advice do you have for the rest of us?

You know, there is no winning. It is and has been a youth culture for a long time. No one wants to see your sorry saggy ass in black leather. Like I said, I give up. You just have to have the confidence of your own identity and your creative life, and everyone else can just go fuck themselves. If you're lucky you have incredible genes, but if you're like me all you can do is keep yourself from grabbing some young punk by the throat and saying, "Listen, Missy! I was once more depraved than you can ever hope to be!" Not that that's true, but if you can't be well-preserved, people should at least *fear* you.

MRR: Witnessing the soul-less nature of modern day diner/coffee shop culture, do you have any nostalgia for Dave's on Broadway now? Do you still draw in diners? Do you feel as though you've now earned the right to declare yourself among the Beas and Myrnas of the world? Are you responsible for the Lynda Barry "Poodle With A Mohawk" poster that's been hanging at Mama's Royal Cafe forever? Please name your Top Three all-time favorite diner or coffee shops.

I *love* Oakland. I am sorry that Dave's is now -what- a chain-link-enclosed used car lot? Pathetic. I have been taking my kids on sketching expeditions to the Farmers Market at 3rd and Fairfax since they were little, because there are lots of old people there who are not only funny-looking, but they sit still for a long time. I do feel sometimes like a Wanda or possibly even a Shirley. I am not responsible for that poster at the Royal. But Mama's Royal would be my number one favorite diner. Dave's (RIP) is a second, and there was a really great diner on Canal Street in New York, now gone, where you could get the most excellent Lime Rickey.

Was there a connection between punk and comics in the '70s and '80s? I know that you were a writer on the first *Simpsons* episode, as well as on *Pee Wee's Playhouse*— had you met Matt Groening and Gary Panter through punk rock?

I met Gary through my husband, Wayne White, now a painter, who worked with Gary on *Pee-wee's Playhouse*, and then Gary introduced us to Matt. I met them through comics, not through punk rock.

MRR: You were also a writer on *Designing Women*. What was that like? Who was your favorite character? Do you still dabble in Hollywood or are you through with it?

I went to work on the last, dying season of *Designing Women* when my son was three months old. It was the worst thing I ever could have done. I had never been a mother before, never worked on staff of a TV show before, never worked in an office before (or since). It was 1992, Linda Bloodworth was off winning the election for Bill Clinton, the inmates were running the asylum, I was sleep-deprived, no one

wanted to be there, least of all me. Annie Potts had a son the same age. We used to nurse together. She was very kind to me. But it was just a nightmare. My husband and I pitched TV shows until we were blue in the face and we finally gave up. He had a miraculous mid-life painting career happen (YAY!) and I finally decided to do this book. But I have written a screenplay with my hairdresser. You know, in the City of Los Angeles, every resident *must* be engaged on a screenplay or television pilot with their hairdresser, Pilates instructor, life coach, pool boy, or personal trainer. IT'S THE LAW.

MRR: What's been your favorite job to date?
Being a cartoonist and illustrator, what else? Being a waitress was not fun—well it was, but it wasn't—but it was a wonderful education. In fact, I used to tell my customers that I was working on my master's and I had a grant to waitress, and they believed me.

MRR: How do you feel about the mainstream embracing and regurgitation of both punk and comic books—two subcultures that have traditionally rejected/been rejected by norms
The embrace of the punk thing makes me anxious and suspicious. It's the Hot Topic/Groucho Club effect. Do you really want to be a member if all those people would have you? Wasn't the whole point of being a punk to shock people and piss them off? How can you do that if you're buying your outfits at Hot Topic? I think those crazy kids today should find some other way to annoy and shock us. It's their job! I am pleased that comics finally have respect. I'm still rubbing my eyes and going "huh?" after enduring snickers and rolled eyes from so many people for so many years when you tell them you are a cartoonist.

MRR: How is your upcoming graphic novel different from your previous books? Is working in autobio something you'd been considering for a while? When can we expect to see the finished book?
Well, my other books were quote-unquote humor books, mostly of the '80s during that big wave of humor books. They were much lighter, just sort-of extended gags. This book has been in the making for over thirty years. The minute I went to work at the Royal I knew it was a story. It took me another fifteen years after that to sort it out and then another fifteen to get to this point. It should only take me another three or four years to finish drawing it.

MRR: How did you land your gig with *Seventeen* magazine? What was the strip about? Do you still do regular strips?
I was all over the place in the '80s. The '80s were very very good to me! I started out at the *National Lampoon*—not in its early heyday, but in the middle, when it was sort of okay but before it became completely horrible. Then I started getting work at the *Village Voice*, which really helped me break out. Because the only people reading the *Lampoon* at that point were prison inmates and thirteen-year old boys. There was an editor at *Seventeen* who had seen my stuff, I think in the *Village Voice*, and they hired me to do a monthly full-page strip. It was dicey because the editor-in-chief, the whole time I was there, was an EX-NUN! So you couldn't go crazy. All through the '80s I worked steadily as a cartoonist and illustrator for all the major magazines, and I have the bulging flat files to prove it. Then we moved to LA, I had kids, and my career fell off a cliff! I did work fairly steadily for a few years for the *Los Angeles Times*, doing sort of social commentary comics about local issues but between their inability to publish my work in color any more and the sorry state of newspapers in general, and the fact that I really had to put everything aside to work on my book, I kind of had to stop.

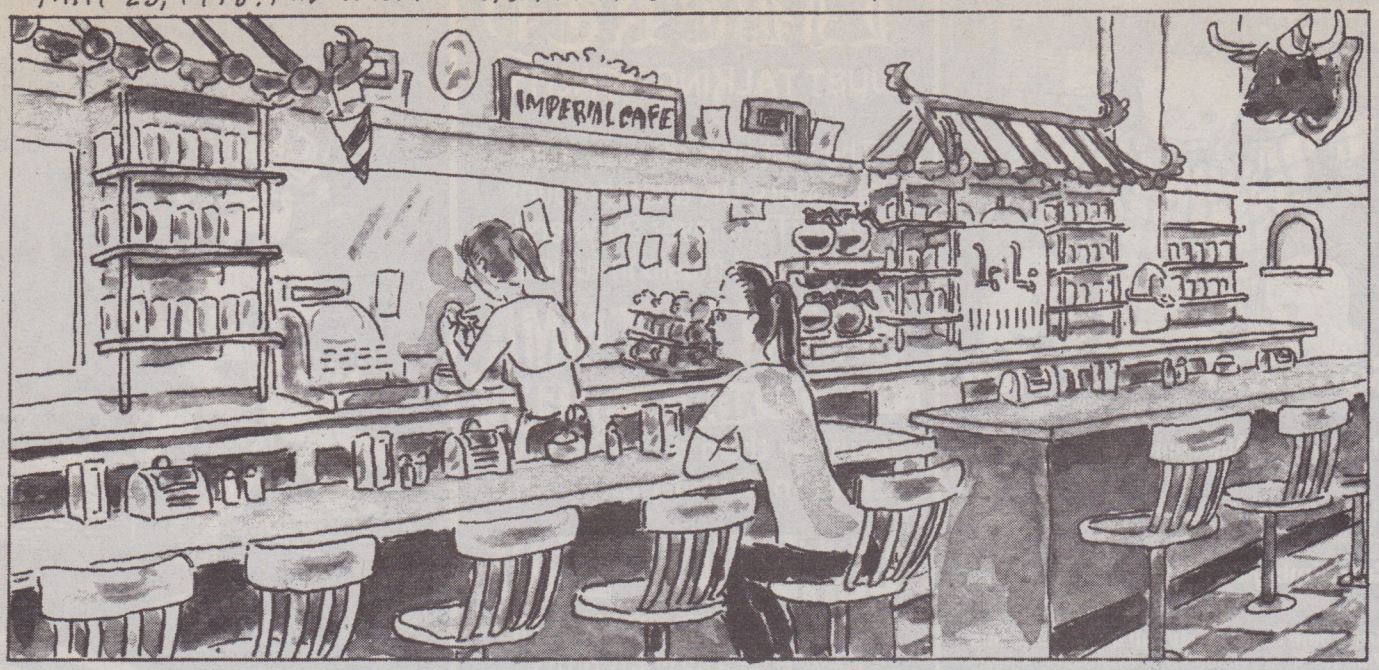
MRR: Who are some of your favorite comic artists (past and present)?
Ernie Bushmiller, Marge, Al Capp, Charles Schulz, E.C. Segar, Chester Gould, Milton Caniff, Crumb, Mary K. Brown, Bob Armstrong, Posy Simmonds, Art Spiegelman, Marjane Satrapi, Allison Bechdel, Vanessa Davis, Rutu Modan, Jillian Tamaki, Esther Watson, Mark Todd, Dan Clowes, Lynda Barry, Roz Chast, Sam Gross...I could go on and on...I'm sorry if I left anyone out!

MRR: How has family life effected your art? How has art life effected your family?
Well, you have to be a mom before anything else. Anyone who tells you different is lying. But you have to keep your identity and not get swallowed up by motherhood or society's expectations of you as a mother. It's very tricky, and it's really, really, really, really HARD, but if you're lucky, then your kids become incredible artists and the payback is indescribably satisfying.

MRR: Looking back, would you do anything differently?
Maybe I would have started sooner on this book, but the way things play out is the way it goes.

MRR: What does the future hold for Mimi Pond?
Hopefully, a good night's sleep.

MAY 23, 1978. MIDAFTERNOON. I AM THE ONLY CUSTOMER.

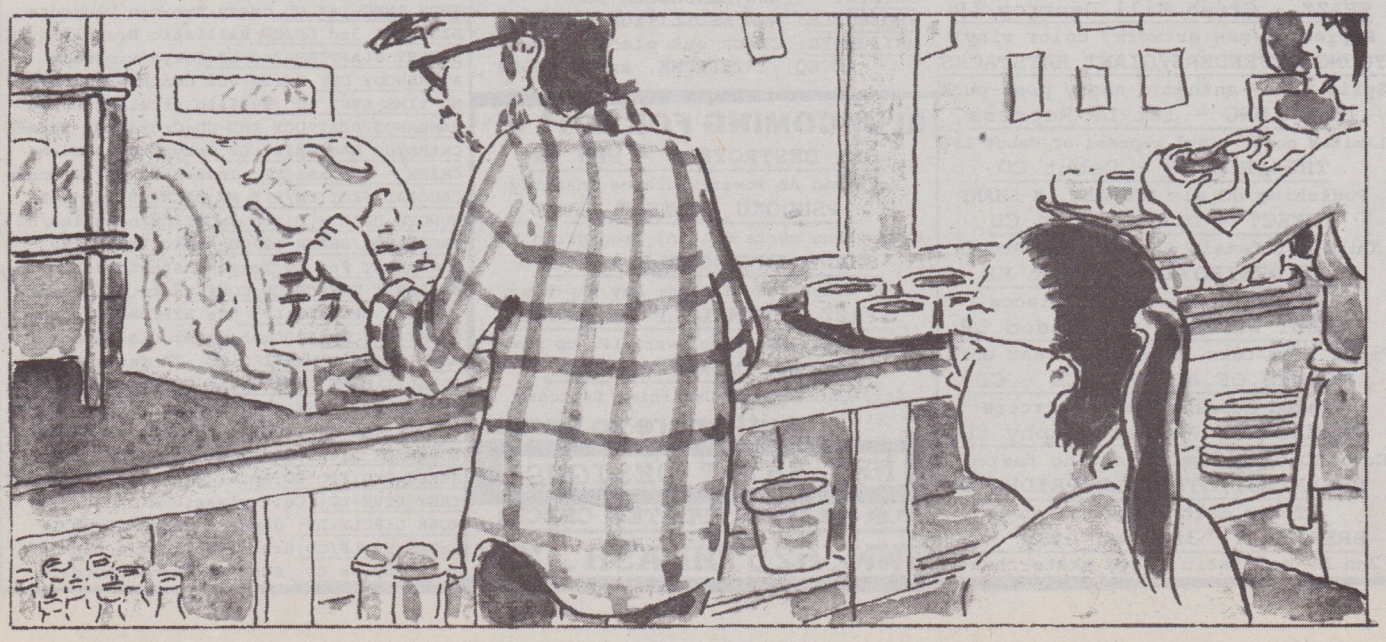


A BELL ON THE FRONT DOOR RINGS AS SOMEONE ENTERS.

A MAN NIMBLY TWIRLS HIMSELF BEHIND THE COUNTER AND OVER TO THE REGISTER.

THAT TURNED OUT TO BE A DISTINCTIVELY LAZLO-LIKE DIP AND TWIRL HE'D DO.

NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, HE WAS PROBABLY HIGH. DOES IT MATTER?



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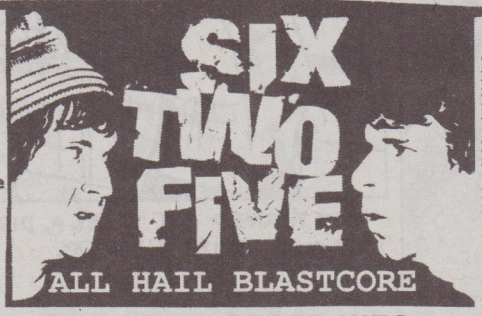

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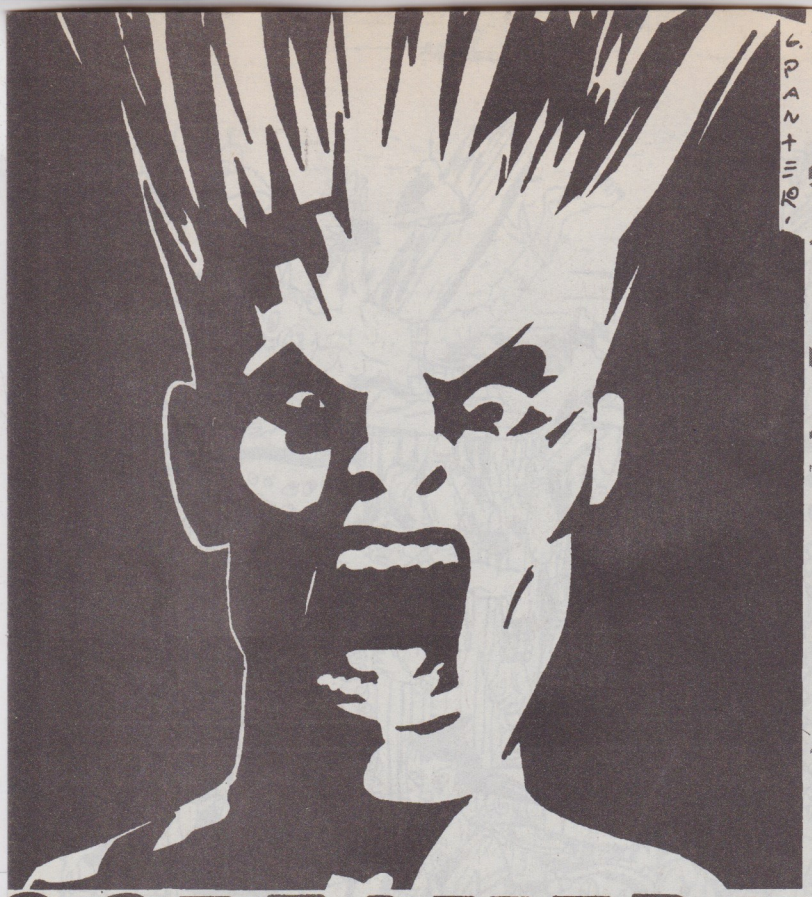
GARY PANTER

GARY PANTER IS ONE OF THE VISUAL ARCHITECTS OF LA PUNK. HIS SCREAMERS LOGO EMEGRED AS ONE OF THE MOST ICONIC AND ENDURING IMAGES OF THE EARLY PUNK MOVEMENT. PERHAPS BEST KNOWN FOR DESIGNING THE SET OF PEE WEE'S PLAYHOUSE, EXEMPLIFYING HIS ATTEMPTS TO INSINUATE HIS OWN SUBVERSIVE IDEAS AND AESTHETICS INTO MAINSTREAM SCENARIOS WITHOUT SOFTENING THE BLOW, AN INTENTION FIRST DETAILED IN HIS ROZZ TOX MANIFESTO:

"LAW: IF YOU WANT BETTER MEDIA, GO MAKE IT."

INTRODUCTION BY LAYLA, INTERVIEW BY AVI SPIVAK



MRR: When you started working in LA, was punk an influence on your work or was it a coincidence that you were there at the same time?
I had developed my styles of working by 1973 and was looking for a place to fit in. Graphically, punk was a fit. I always liked weird music, so that fit too, especially the more experimental stuff like Wire, Magazine, the Residents and Pere Ubu.

MRR: How did your association with *Slash* begin? And why has *Slash* never been made into a collection like the other big magazines of that era?
I saw the first issue of *Slash* at the newsstand at Gower Gulch and called them up. Samiof and Kickboy liked my work and gave me half a page an issue, then a whole page in every issue.

Slash was started by Steve Samiof and Claude Bessy, who later sold it to Bob Biggs. Later Steve started *Stuff* magazine and then went into the hotel business in Desert Hot Springs and later the Dominican Republic, where he still is. Biggs saw that *Slash* would never make money and so folded the mag, and stuck with Slash records. Claude Bessy, aka Kickboy Face, the main spirit of *Slash*, left LA for England where he managed the Virgin Prunes and later moved to Barcelona where he died of cancer, god bless him. He was a wonder! All these guys were cool people. Making a *Slash* book would be a thankless labor of love. It would be up to Biggs. Don't know what is happening with him. Biggs was married to Penelope Spheeris, who was the filmmaker who made the *Decline of Western Civilization* movies.

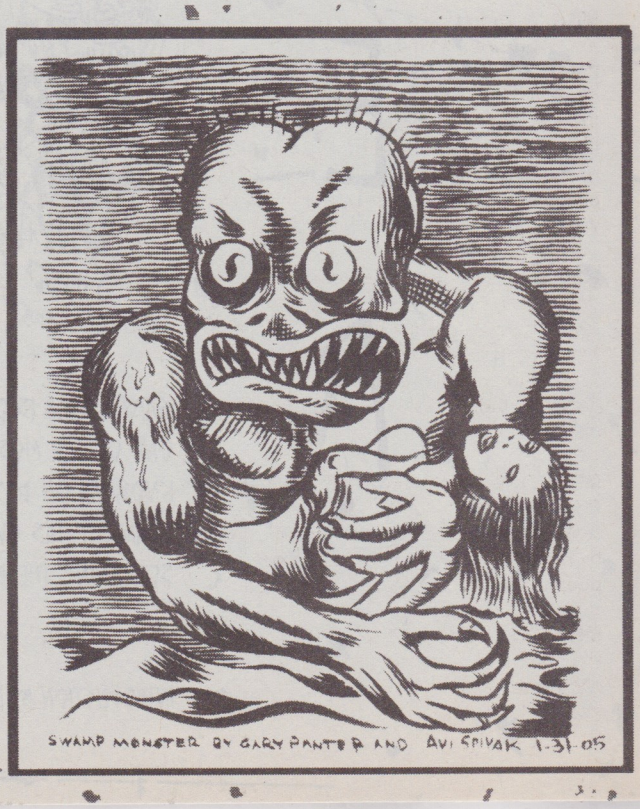
MRR: Do you have any favorite memories of your time around the L.A. punk scene? What were your favorite bands of the time? And do you find yourself still listening to any of it?
There were a lot of neat people. KK and Trudy lived upstairs from me on Beachwood Drive. Tito La Riva of the Plugz, later of Los Crusados and Tarantula, was a pal. Little Robert Lopez of the Zeros became El Vez. I did the first interview of Devo for *Slash* and interviewed Andy Partridge of XTC when he was in town. I attended a great show at the Olympic Auditorium featuring Black Flag, the Butthole Surfers, and PiL with Matt Groening and Richard Gehr, the culture writer. I made friends with Byron Coley, Chris Dejardins of the Flesheaters, and Will Amato at the *Slash* office. Worked on a punk issue of *New West* magazine and orchestrated a mass photo portrait of the Weirdos, X, Germs, and a lot more luminaries of the scene. Often talked to Richard VOM Gulcher Meltzer at parties, though I was too unschooled to know what he was talking about. Interviewed and became friendly with Philip K. Dick before *Blade Runner* came out. Lots of fun was had. Sometimes.

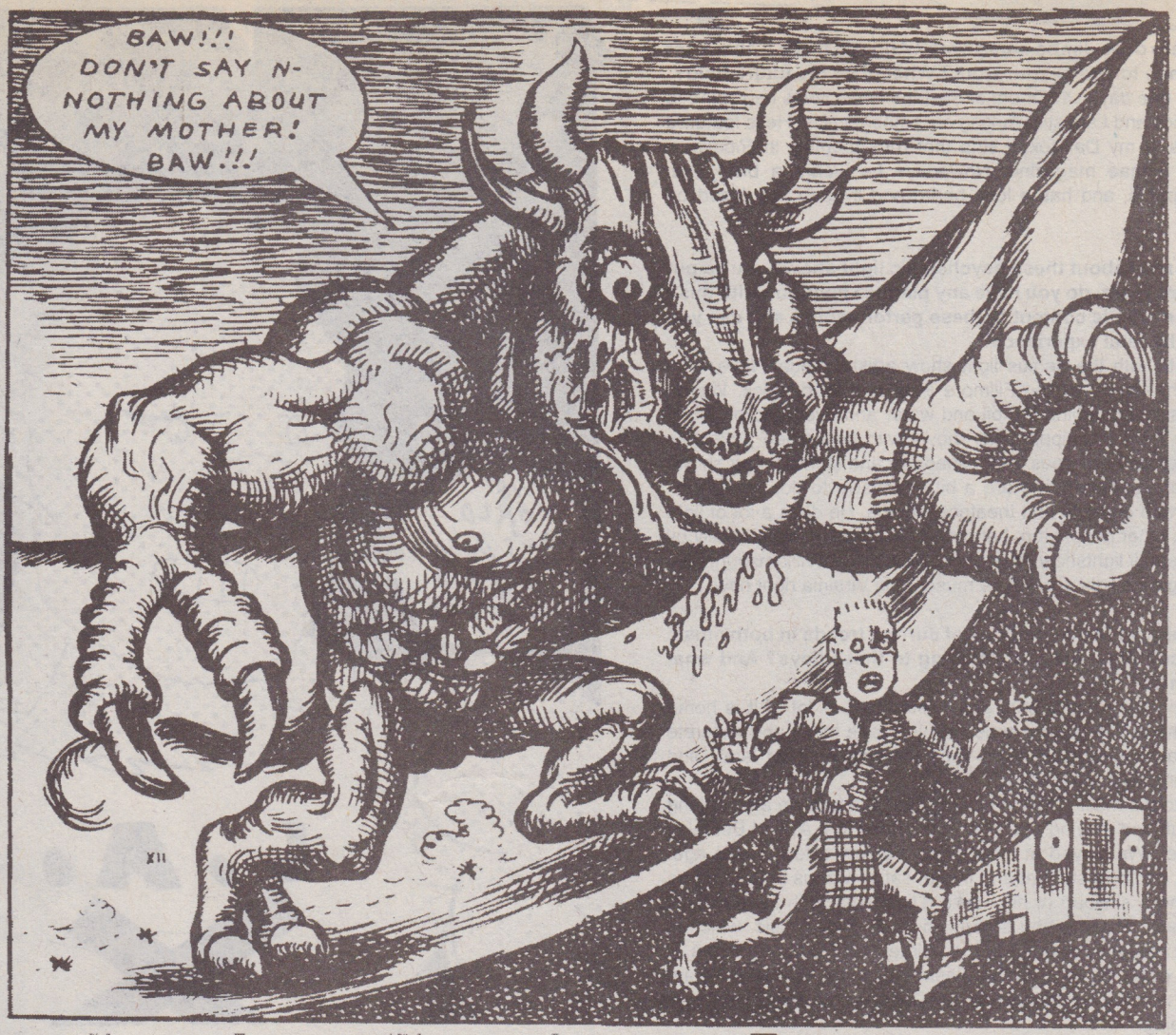
One high point, though scary, was when the Huntington beach jock punks joined the scene and suddenly there were thousands of punks climbing the lights and dragging themselves behind cars and other very foolish stuff.

It was a small scene and I saw almost all the bands many times. My personal favorites were the Weirdos, the Plugz, the Zeros, and the Screamers and the Germs. X was great. They were more like a SF '60s band in a way.

I have many great memories of Germs shows. I was married, at the time to the manager of the Germs. Darby and company were over at the house sometimes. I talked to Don Bolles more than the others, as he was very smart and talkative; Pat Smear was very nice and loved exotic birds; Darby was always nice to me for some reason; Lorna never said a word to me as far as I remember. Later I was friendly with the Red Hot Chili Peppers. Even so, I was more of an observer than a participant, hanging around the edges watching rather than plunging into the mosh pit, which wasn't called the mosh pit at first. And staying home and drawing Jimbo and painting.

MRR: The Screamers logo is one of the most iconic images of punk rock. How did that come about? And what are some of the stranger places you've seen the logo end up?
It was based on the look of Tomata and Tommy, but I already





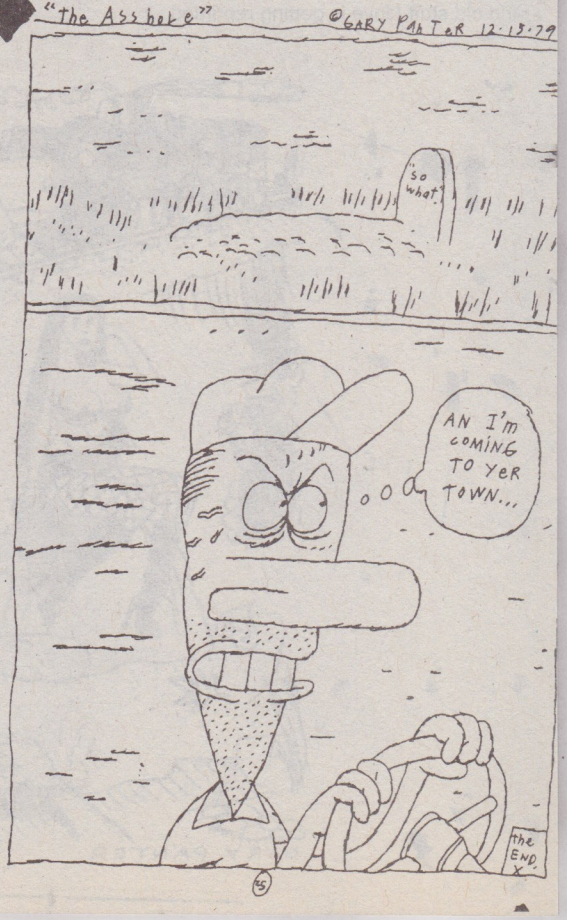
had a Frankenstein-like character called Jelly that I had invented at art school in Texas that had a similar look. It was ripped off and reconfigured a lot and I have heard people had tattoos of it, but I never saw one.

MRR: As a musician yourself, can you talk about how music is influential in your art? And how art influences your music?
I am not so talented, but I love to hold a guitar and it is fun to make music, after growing up in the Church of Christ in Texas where music was suspect and somewhat forbidden. I make music nowadays mainly with Devin Flynn. We have a new record on Ecstatic Peace, and my 1982 *Pray For Smurph* LP from Overheat Music in Tokyo has finally been released on CD. I listen to all kinds of music when I work, but not always. I love hippie music and Zappa and Beefheart and experimental music also. I listen to the Technicolor Web of Sound online and recently bought a Skip Bifferty record.

MRR: You've done several record covers for Zappa. How did that end up happening?
I've told the story many times. Do I have the energy to do it again? I love Zappa and Mothers music and the art of Cal Schenkel. Warners hired me to do three covers in quick succession that turned out to be unauthorized, drat. I never met Zappa. My friend Matt Groening did and told me Zappa liked the covers. Cal Schenkel is alive and well. Check his site.

MRR: Does being labeled as a "punk" artist ever stand in the way of your painting/ fine art career?
I don't think any art collectors know about that. Doing the Pee Wee show and Jimbo overshadowed my art career some. But it is always a matter of meeting people. The people who pigeonhole you don't matter much. I live. I paint.

MRR: Do you envision any future collaborations with Pee Wee?
Paul and I have *almost* done a lot of other TV and movie and cartoon projects and still pitch stuff, but it is hard to land big media money and I don't have endless energy or interest to pitch projects. I'd rather make art. He is a fun guy. We are pals.



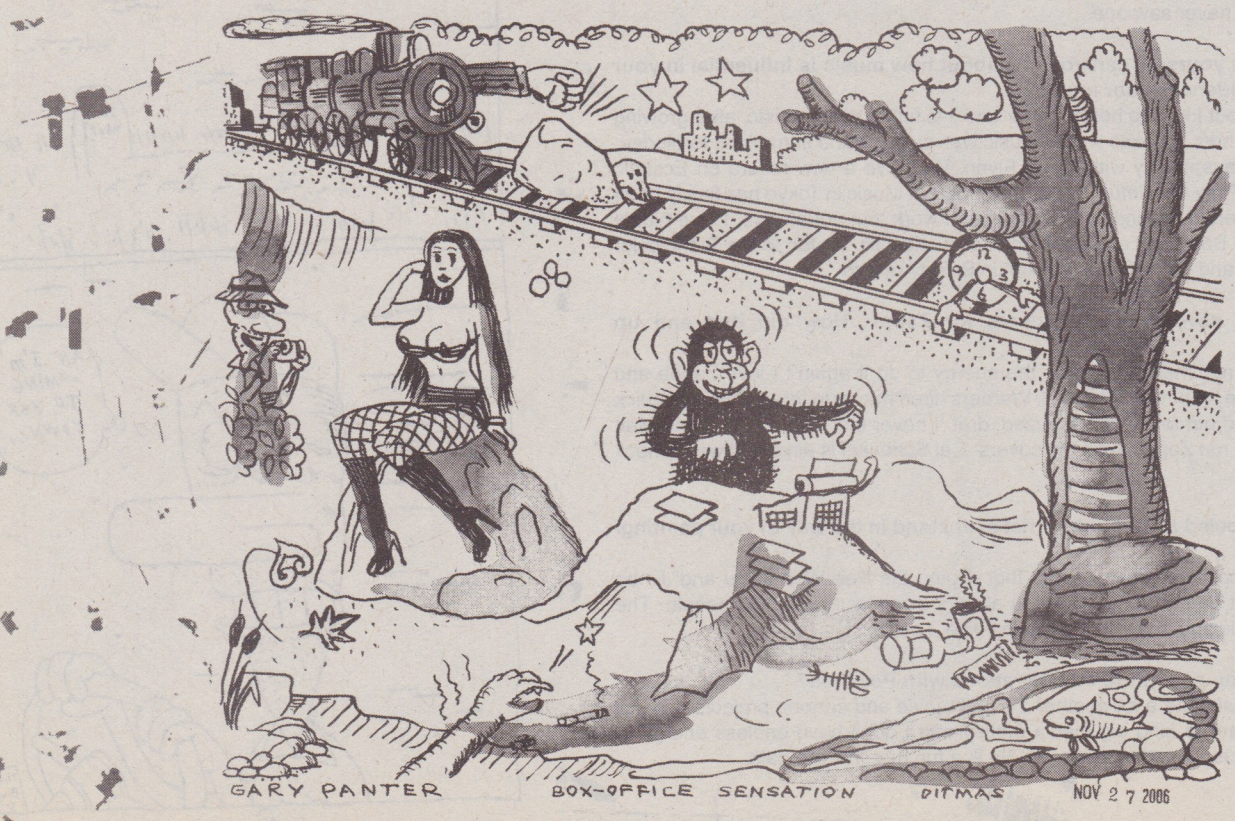
MRR: Where does Jimbo come from? And will he be a character you continue to use in your work? What does his future hold?
I drew him one day in 1974 out of the blue when I was beginning to make comics and I am still working on Jimbo comics. He is featured these days in my Dal Tokyo strip that runs monthly in *Riddim*, a Japanese reggae magazine. Nowadays he wears a black hat, shredded pants, and has a long beard and lives in the desert on Mars.

MRR: I've read about these psychedelic light shows you've put on in recent years, do you have any plans to continue with this? What is the artistic content of these performances and can you describe the total experience?
I collaborate with the genius light show artist Joshua White, who did the light shows for the Fillmore East and Woodstock. We do light shows that combine the oil and water and overhead projector techniques from the hippie light shows with new video projection light sources and my ideas about shadows and stencils. Our shows use a lot of equipment and are a bit expensive to do, so we look for places with budgets and theatrical setups. He does a lot of light shows with other people too. I attracted his attention accidentally by building a small lightshow theater in my studio in Williamsburg. We are working on a light show for a museum in Virginia right now.

MRR: Finally, what do you think of current trends in both music and comics? What are you listening to these days? And what about comics?
People send me a lot of stuff and I listen to it. A lot of it is home made. Some of it is good. I especially like tape loopy and concrete music. I have been listening to Todd Dockstader a lot lately and highly recommend his Bijou CD.

I listen to the music Devin Flynn and I make and we are working on new stuff and playing out a bit. We played in L.A. and Berkeley this summer. We played at the Knitting Factory a few weeks ago. Rick Potts, a former student and friend, sat in with us in LA, and he just sent me a shitload of his music (Dinosaurs With Horns, Solid Eye, Points of Friction, and so on) and L.A. FMS music, which is great. Rick designed and made the helmet that Pee Wee wears at the end of every show when he blasts out of the Playhouse. I am still friends with the Residents and Jay Cotton and listen to whatever they are doing.

I read a lot more novels than comics. Comics are going strong and old stuff I love is getting reprinted.



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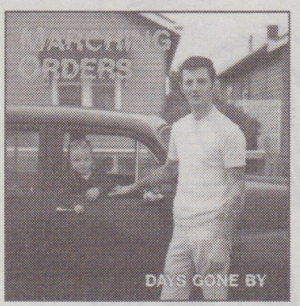

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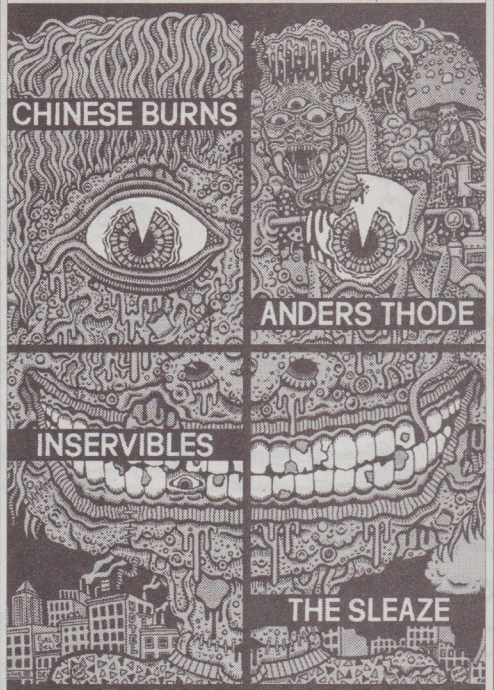

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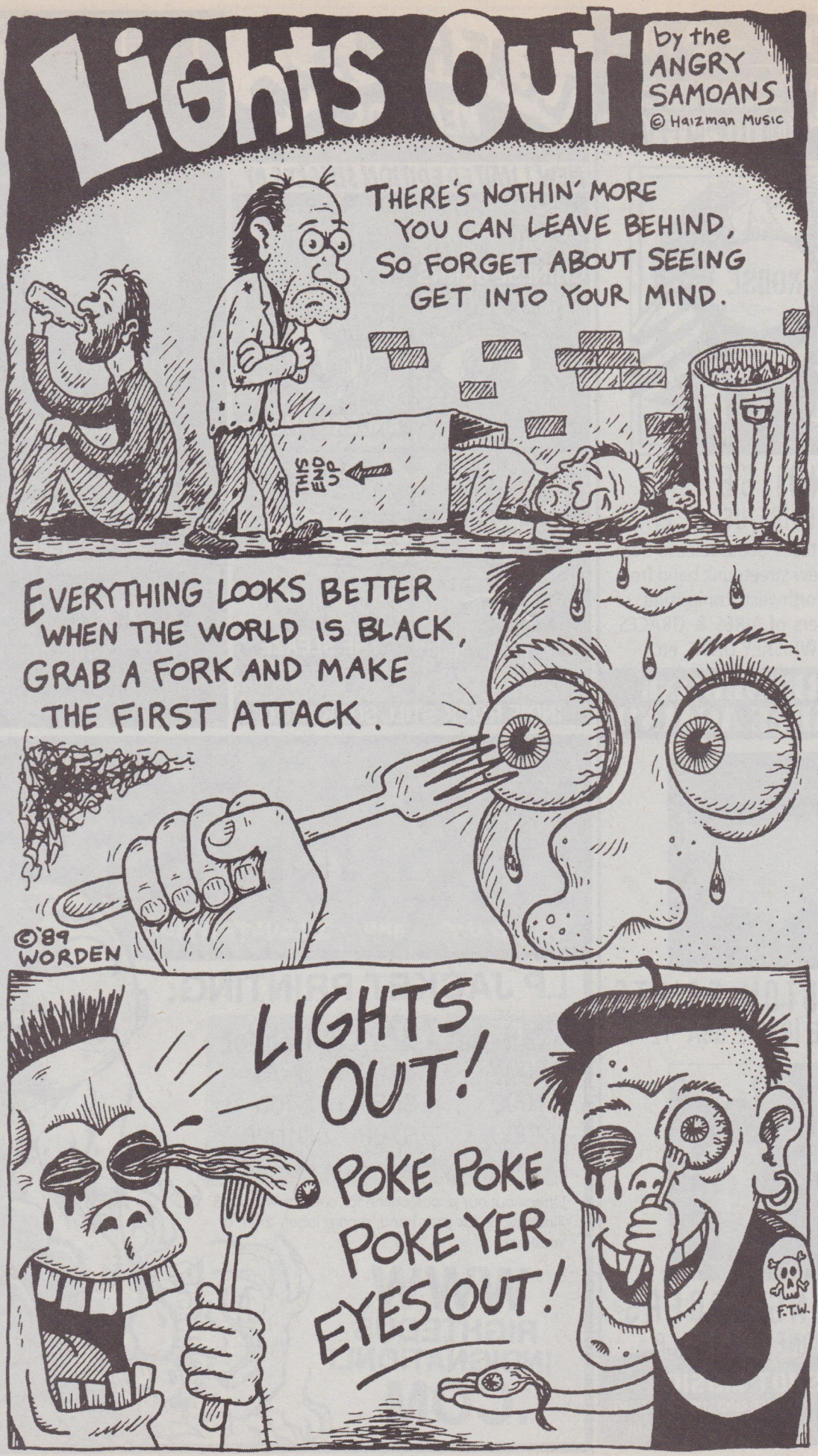
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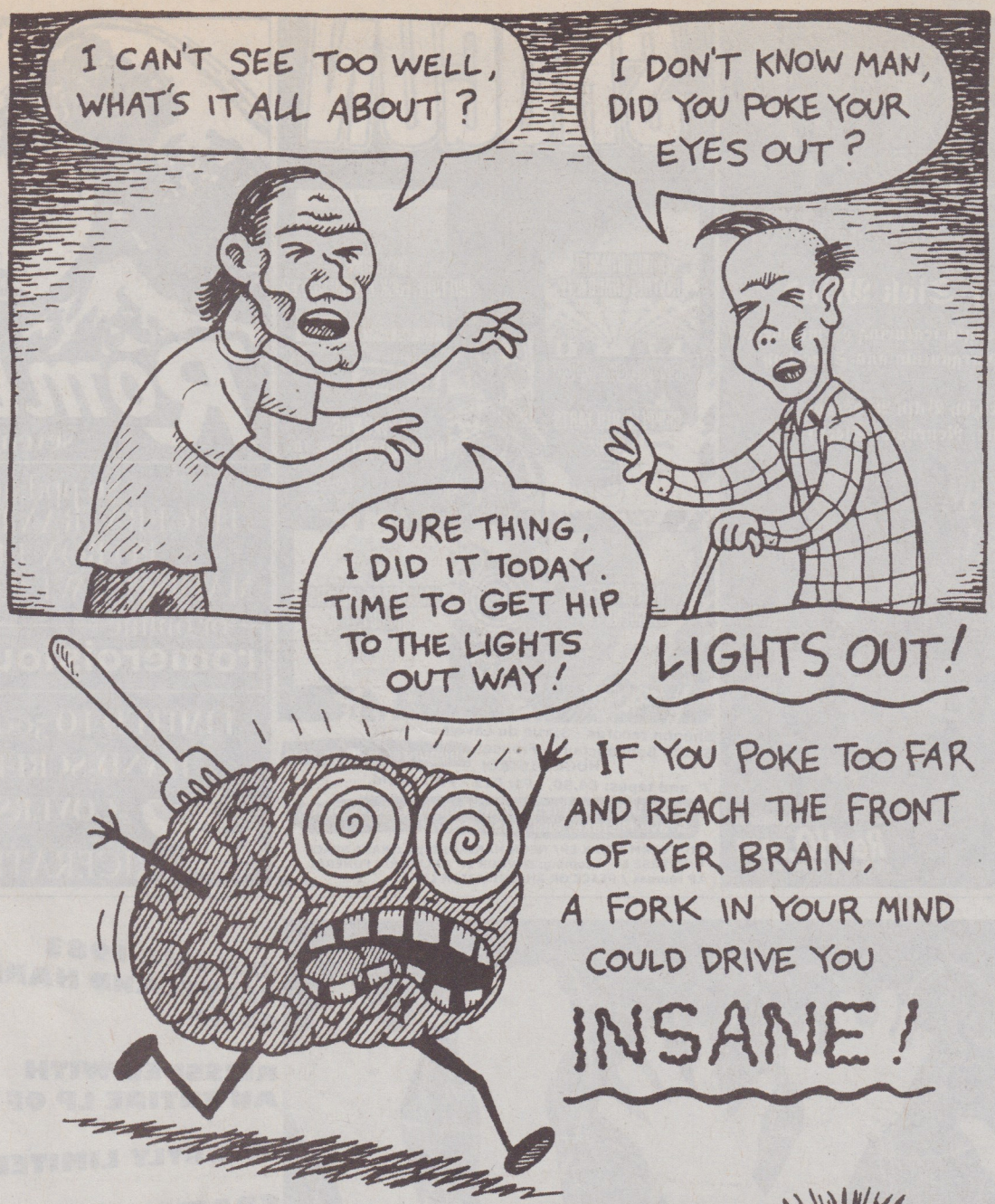
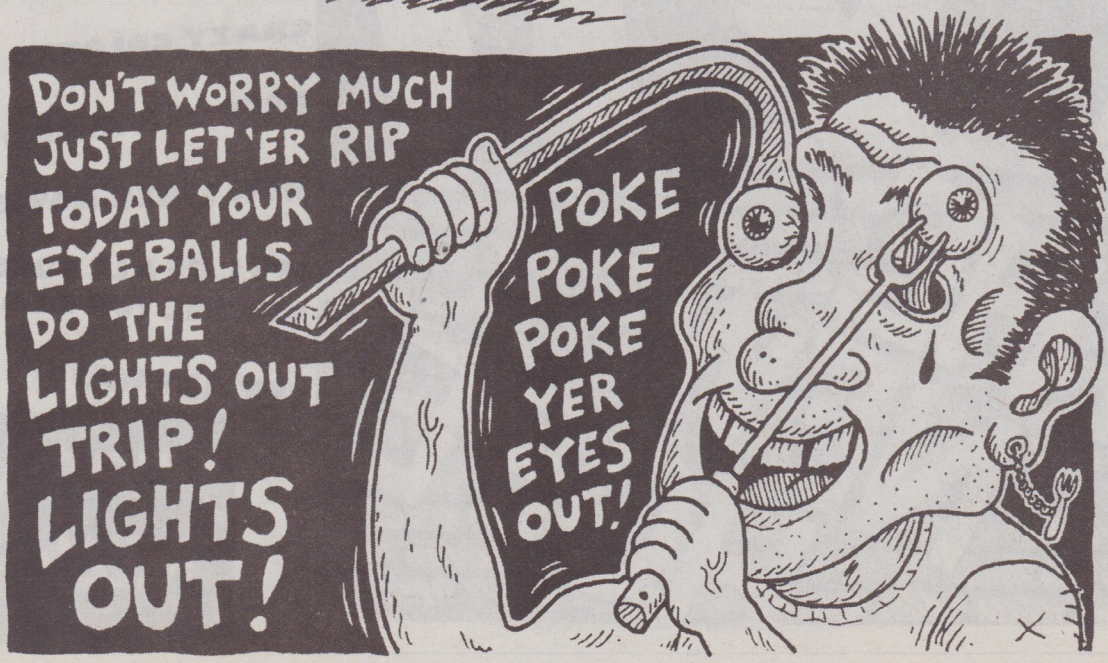
POKE POKE POKE YER EYES OUT!
F.T.W.


I CAN'T SEE TOO WELL, WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?
I DON'T KNOW MAN, DID YOU POKE YOUR EYES OUT?
SURE THING, I DID IT TODAY. TIME TO GET HIP TO THE LIGHTS OUT WAY!
LIGHTS OUT!
IF YOU POKE TOO FAR AND REACH THE FRONT OF YER BRAIN, A FORK IN YOUR MIND COULD DRIVE YOU
INSANE!


DON'T WORRY MUCH JUST LET 'ER RIP TODAY YOUR EYEBALLS DO THE LIGHTS OUT TRIP! LIGHTS OUT!
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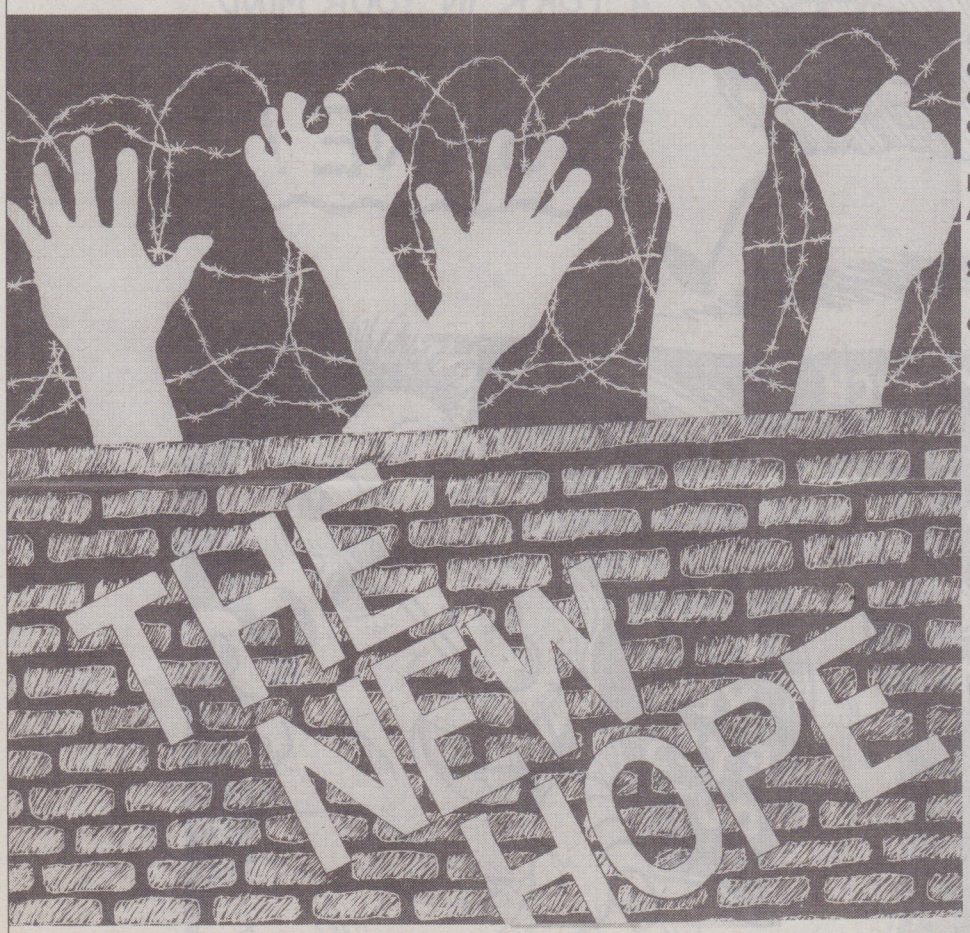

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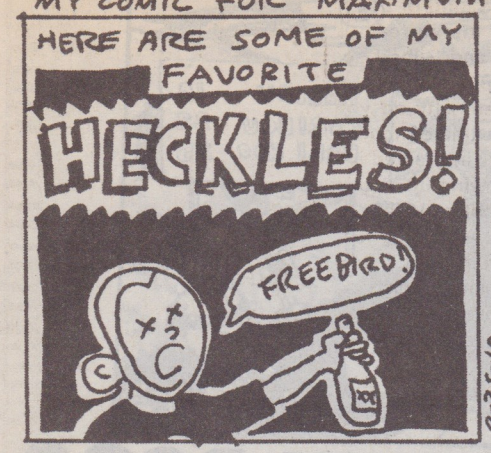

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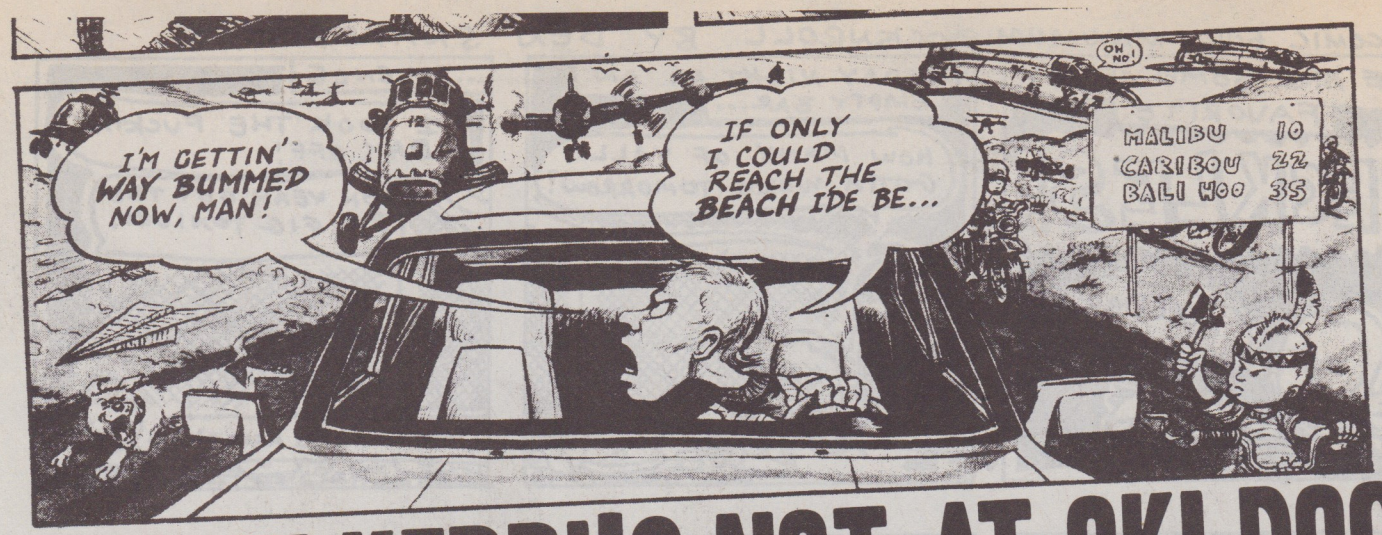
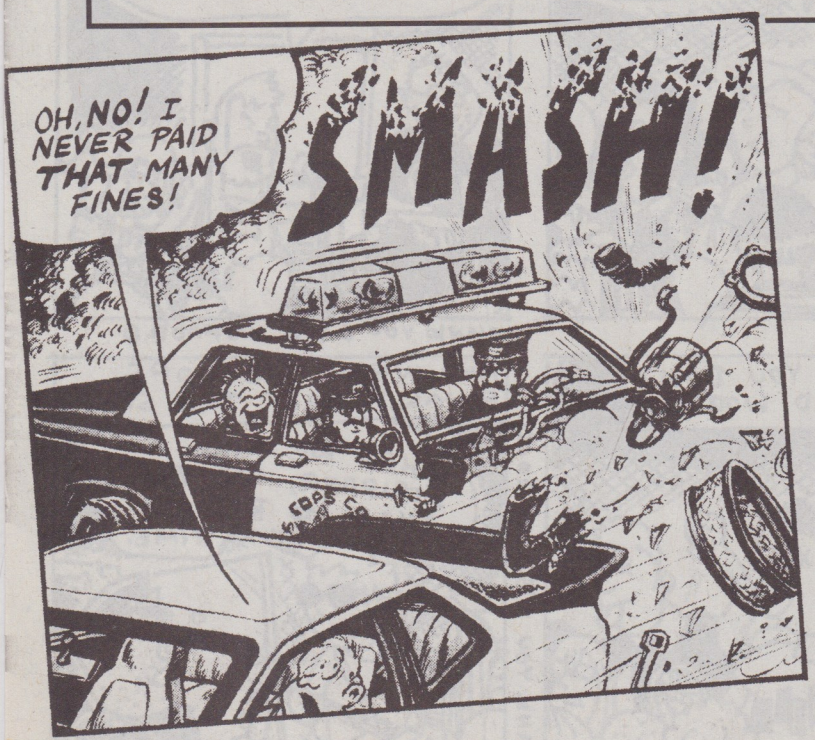


SHAWN KERRI'S NOT AT OKI DOGS

An Appreciation by Janelle Hessig

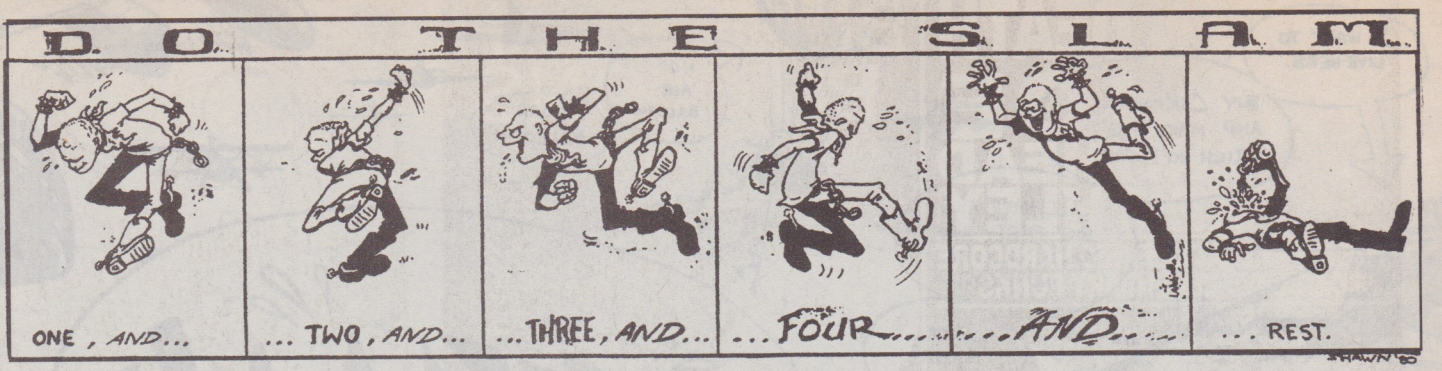
There are generally three revelations that people experience when first discovering Shawn Kerri.

1. The first one is that a lot of your favorite early punk art is all drawn by the same person. I had them safety-pinned to the back of my jacket and so did you. The Germs mohawk skull busting out of the circle? Shawn Kerri. The Circle Jerks skanking guy? Shawn Kerri. The names of other artists from the same era have endured—Pettibon, Pushead, Mad Marc Rude— but, for some reason, Shawn Kerri remains more obscure. She was as prolific as these other more notorious artists and, for me personally, her art resonated more with the things that I like best about punk—action, humor, and being a fucked up kid. So, why isn't Shawn more well known? One possible contributing factor to her lack of recognition could be that she didn't fight tooth and nail over copyrights. Around 1986, when the Circle Jerks began pining for mainstream success, their agent and record label decided that they owned the rights to the skanking kid image and shouldn't pay Shawn. Rather than deal with legal battles and mangled friendships, she just let it go and signed the rights over to Keith Morris. The current day skank kid is a bastardized commercial version of her original art.



2. The second revelation is that Shawn Kerri is not a dude. Born Shawn Maureen Fitzgerald in 1958 near San Diego, Shawn Kerri was a part of the late '70s, early '80s Southern California punk scene. During the same period that she was drawing punk flyers and publishing a fanzine called *Rude Situation* (with one-time boyfriend, Mad Marc Rude), she was also contributing regularly to a multitude of magazines and underground comic anthologies. Among notable publications like (*Mad* magazine posers) *CRACKED* magazine, *Hustler*, and early Last Gasp titles like *Cocaine Comics* and *Commies from Mars*, she most consistently contributed to the seminal hot rod and humor magazine *CARtoons*. During their first meeting, *CARtoons*' editor, Dennis Elferson, initially tried to send Shawn Kerri away at the door due to her lacking the Y chromosome needed to draw hot rods. But one look at her outstanding portfolio shut his mouth. Not only was she skilled at drawing muscle cars, she was also into driving them and owned a '57 Chevy Bel-Air (which she used to drive her band The Dinettes to the infamous Western Front festival at the Deaf Club in San Francisco in 1979).

I WANT TO LIVE HERE.
BUY CARtoons AND MAKE ME RICH SO I CAN.
I'LL HAVE A BIG PARTY AND YOU'LL ALL BE INVITED...
...FUR SHUR!
HOT AIR BALLOON
WORD BALLOON
NYAAA!!!
NO CATS



Comics, punk, and cars – all heavily dude-dominated domain and Shawn Kerri ruled them all with her superior art. Although her drawing style is actually kind-of conventional in certain ways, with her use of hard black lines and anatomically straightforward characters, her drawings still convey the rawness and wild vibe of some looser, more stylized cartoonists. This is due in part to dynamic posing and the frenetic details that always make her comics come alive with chaos, violence, and fun, like a gutter-bound Jack Davis, but it's also due to something more intangible, an essential genuineness.

3. The third realization is that Shawn Kerri is dead. No, wait—she's alive! No, sorry, she's dead. No, wait … There has been decades worth of chatter about whether or not Shawn Kerri is dead, with people on either side of the debate swearing first or second hand knowledge one way or the other. Spread all willy nilly across the internet, there are people who claim she OD'd in the late '90s (including credible sources like her former *CARtoons* colleague, George Trosley) and then there are alleged sightings of her like she's a goddamn Bigfoot, people claiming to have hung out with her on the beach and so forth. On the Gig Posters message board, one thorough-as-a-motherfucker Nancy Drew wannabe claims to have searched the US Social Security death database in '09 and did not find a Shawn Fitzgerald or a Shawn Kerri listed as deceased. Of all of these accounts, the one that rings the most true to my ears is from Carl Schneider, who did a magazine called *Black Market* and is currently making a documentary about Mad Marc Rude. Apparently, Carl went to Shawn Kerri's mother's house around 2004 and found Shawn there. The story is that she is battling horrible health issues—the most serious being severe brain damage from a spill down the stairs and that she is not really there any more and can scarcely communicate. Is it true or just another Bigfoot footprint? I say it's probably true, although it would be nice to believe otherwise.

I don't know that there is anything I could say to do appropriate justice to her legacy. There are a lot of other stories to dig up about Shawn Kerri that I haven't even touched on—including her working on boats, being a junkie, and a story from *Fucked Up & Photocopied* where she pulled a sword out of her trunk to fight some skinheads. Extreme rumors are the hallmark of a bone fide bad ass and among all of the stories about her, it's only right that Shawn Kerri should have the last word here:

"I've never gotten the same thrill out of having one of my cartoons printed in a magazine as much as seeing one of my old fliers--something I did for a punk gig the week before--laying in the gutter. Seeing it all mashed and dirty thrilled me, because that was how I was living, too. It looked exactly like my life."
(from Paul Grushkin's *Art of Rock* book)

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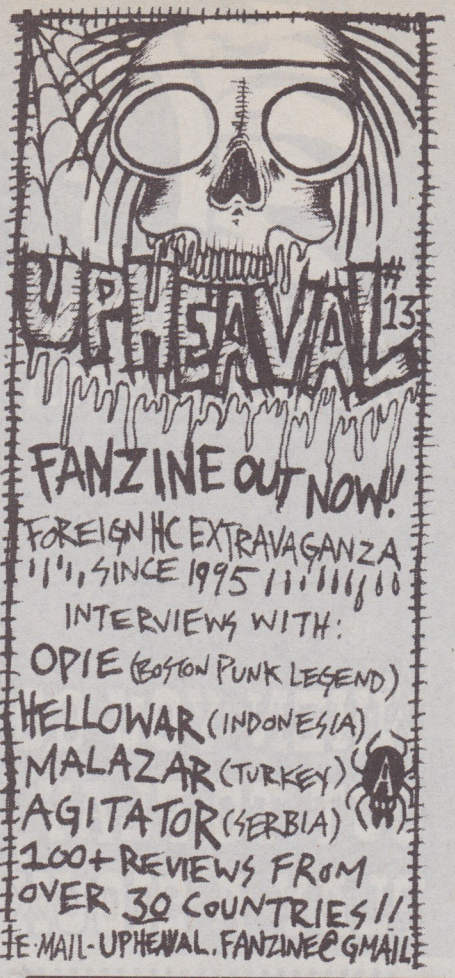

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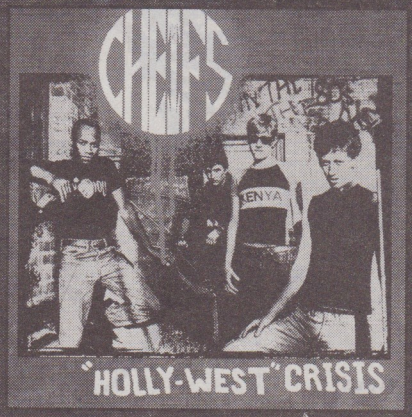

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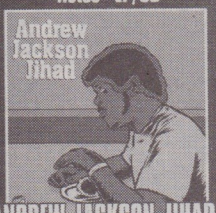

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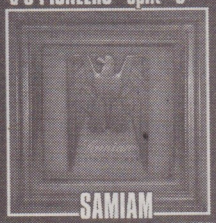
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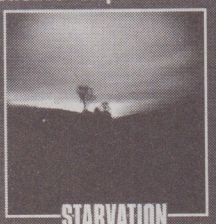
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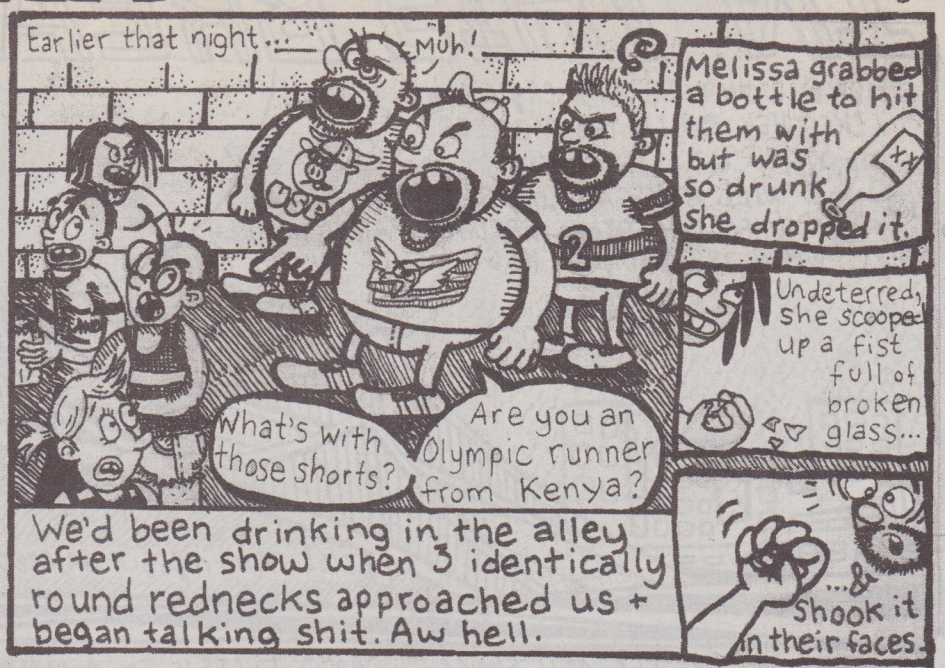
ONE NIGHT IN MONTANA

Excerpted from "Suburban Bitch" tour diary, 2003
--------→ Janelle Blarg

Everyone was passed out in the van, but I wasn't going to pull over until we were outside city limits.



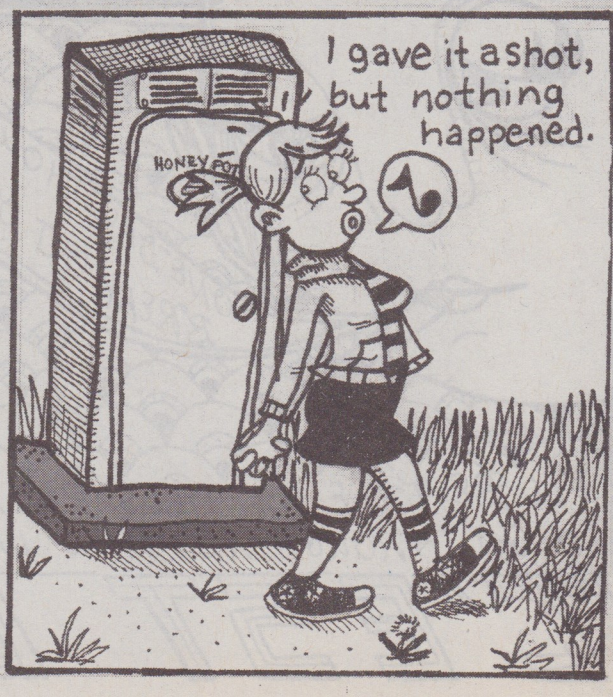
We'd been drinking in the alley after the show when 3 identically round rednecks approached us + began talking shit. Aw hell.

While trying to keep my friends from getting hurt in the ensuing scuffle, I wound up getting punched in the jaw by our roadie, Melissa. My own teammate!

I found a makeshift rest stop + pulled over. Me + Buzz dragged our sleeping bags to a concrete slab in the middle of a field to sleep. Burrs in my ass, bruise on my cheek but I was weirdly comfortable. There were billions of stars out + it was incredibly peaceful.

There was graffiti in the porta potty that read:

I will eat your pussy-NOW.
Stand up.
Walk outside.
I, I will walk over to you.



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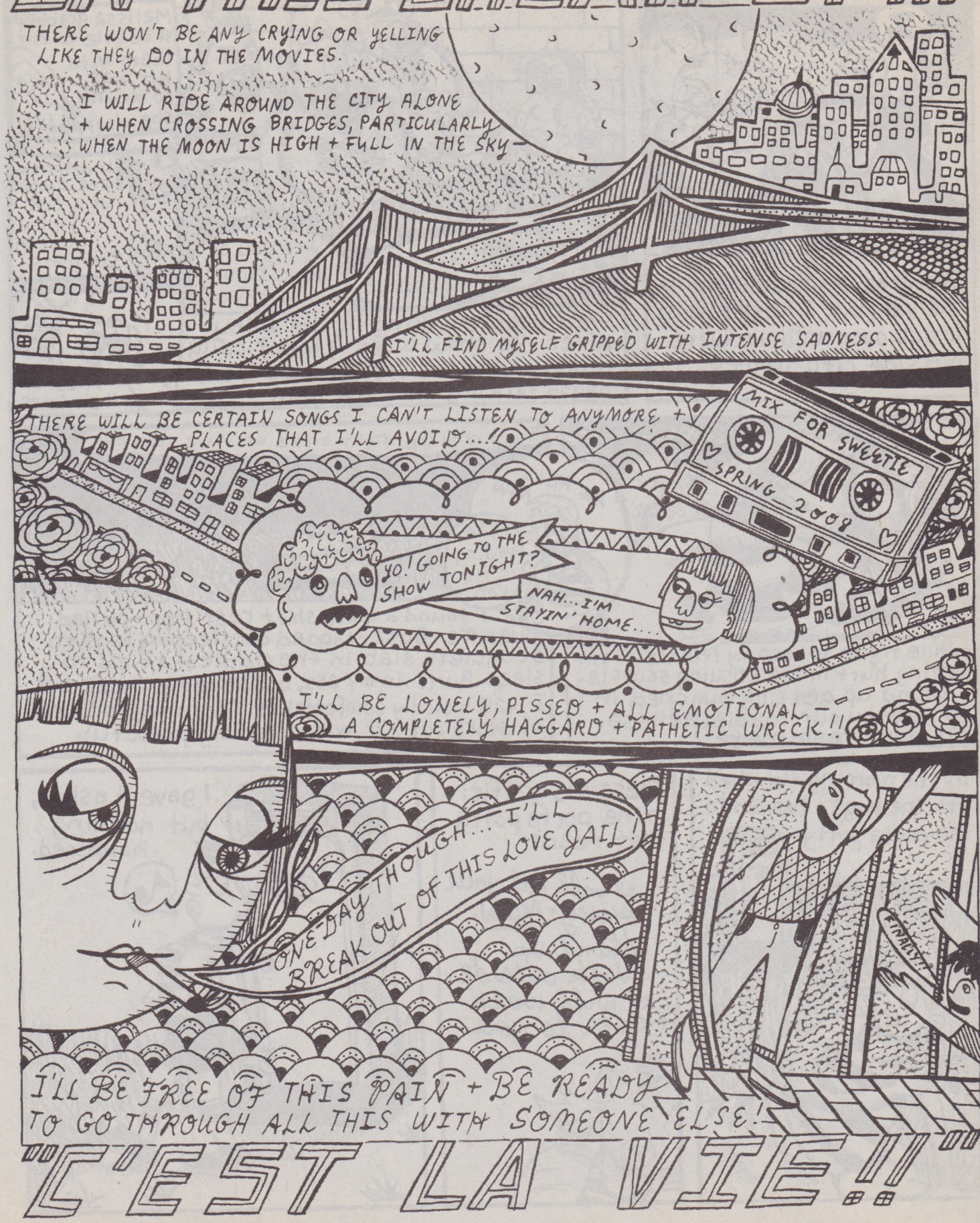

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WASTE NOT-
CRAZY PHONE
HILFIGE
TOMMY
TIME TO SHOP
i'm hatin' it
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GEEZ!
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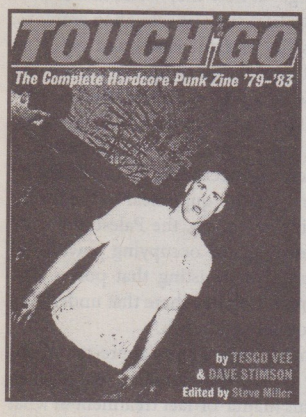

Touch and Go: The Complete Hardcore Punk Zine '79-'83
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www.touchandgobook.com

Scathing. Sharp-witted. Obsessed with sex. Tesco Vee and Dave Stimson, inspired by Los Angeles's *Slash* magazine, by the explosion of "new music" across the country and world, and most importantly by the itching desire to tell it like it was, published the first issue of the almighty *Touch and Go* fanzine in 1979. The pair was lucky enough to be keyed in to the emerging hardcore scene (though unlucky enough to be stuck in Lansing, Michigan, at the time) and *T and G* lasted four years and twenty-two glorious issues—collected here in their entirety, along with reminiscences from Vee, Stimson, Ian MacKaye, Henry Rollins, Corey Rusk, John Brannon and the like.

Simply put, this is essential reportage from one of the high points in underground music. The zine's coverage was wide; the focus was punk but *T and G* also explored new wave, post-punk, two-tone ska and early noise/industrial, from the bigger acts of the day (U2, the Specials) down to the most obscure (X_X, Vast Majority) and yes, everything in between. These two highly opinionated scribes were unafraid (one might say eager) to call bullshit on what they deemed lacking, but at the same time they were generous with praise for anything that they felt deserved it. This was *Touch and Go*'s greatest strength and the hallmark of a truly great zine: it drew a line in the sand between the cool and the uncool, the inspired and the dull, the life-affirming and the soul-destroying, and made you want to be on the right side of that line.

Like the title says, you're getting the complete run of the zine here—almost 600 pages of black and white vitriol. It's not fancy, and in fact some of the photos have annoying moiré patterns, but to complain about the visual quality of a xeroxed fanzine would be to miss the point. Tacked on at the end is some historical ephemera, including *Touch and Go*'s inauspicious predecessor: the "complete run" (yes, all four pages) of Vee's first foray into the underground publishing, *999 Times* (a 999 fanzine).

Thanks to Bazillion Points, bathrooms across the land can now have their very own copy of *Touch and Go*. It shall henceforth be recognized as the marker of good taste (or lack thereof).

—Chris Hubbard

Low Bite
Sin Soracco
138 pages • $14.95
PM Press
www.pmpress.org

"If only we could be left alone to do our time, take care of business: make booze, smuggle drugs, play mailroom Russian roulette. Big fucking deal, the world isn't at stake here. We don't want nothing fancy. Do our time in peace. Comfort. A little dignity. They can't hear it. It's just the truth. Just the truth."

There's plenty of plain truth in Sin Soracco's novel of female prison life *Low Bite*. First published in 1989 by Black Lizard, the underground classic is reprinted here by PM Press along with a brief author interview afterwards. If you missed out years ago, now's your chance.

I'll warn you though—*Low Bite* is a quick, unsentimental read. 130 pages of unapologetic, inside reporting. Our narrator is 26-year-old Morgan, convicted on breaking-and-entering. She runs the law library. The books, however, are mostly a prop to hide her home-brewing operation. "Listen, you silly prick, the law library's a sham. Freedom through booze, sex or drugs is a lot more likely than through the courts." That's our narrator schooling a young lawyer visiting the prison. He's also maybe the love interest.

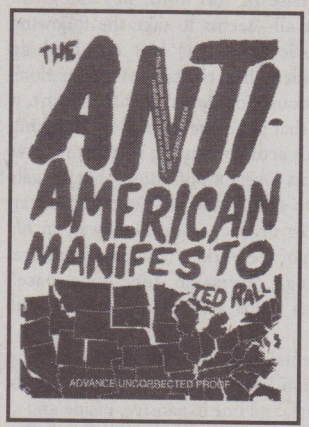
Expect no gooey sentiment here either. On relationships: "Both of them had an inflated idea of their own abilities, each underestimating the depths to which the other would sink, given a reason to do so." Readers looking for a cozy mystery should look elsewhere. *Low Bite* does have a crime at the center of it – the money of a dead husband—but there's no big-hearted detectives here, no redemption or even a clean get away for the characters:

"I didn't give a flying fuck if the guy in the visiting room was Leonard or Roland or Tony the Loser, alive or dead, China's husband lover brother pimp. More: I didn't care if the bloody world came to an end. We'd still be locked up one on top of the other in some limbo warehouse with too many women, dramas, broken promises, empty lives; we'd all be back we'd all be back we'd watch each other get old fat unlovely we'd come and go and come again never quite making it standing in line the big break any day after day waiting."

What readers will get, however, is an unrelenting first page—a failed escape attempt over the barbed wire followed by a scene cut of our narrator provoking a new guard. The pace doesn't stay quite that frenetic but you won't regret reading all 130-pages in a single setting. Characters aren't fleshed out and the mystery isn't exactly resolved cleanly but I hardly think that's relevant since the author's stated goal is "the intense visceral pleasure of stories. One day our stories will bring the bastards down."

The book is part of PM Press's collaboration with the Green Arcade, "a curated bookstore" in San Francisco. The cover art is a joy of obsessive, hand-drawn appeal. This is a singular book, and a recommended one.

—Travis Fristoe.



The Anti-American Manifesto
Ted Rall
288 pages • $15.95
Seven Stories Press
www.sevenstories.com

Two years and nothing's changed is the short message of *The Anti-American Manifesto*. In late 2010, the United States is still in decline. Unemployment, environmental devastation, a collapsing economy, the housing crisis, lack of health care, and foreign wars don't show signs of letting up at Obama's mid-term. In his new book, Ted Rall chronicles the contemporary failures of the U.S. government to change in the face of these ongoing problems. He argues that nothing short of violent revolution will save us from the bleak future to which we ride.

Rall provides a good summary for those of us who are too easily depressed to read new articles every day about how elected officials sat on their hands as the gulf oil spill spread, or the decadence of bankers and CEO's in the face of mass lay offs, not to mention widespread foreclosures and the continuing lack of access to medical care. He pulls statistics from mainstream journalism to support his argument that "The United States doesn't work any more. Capitalism never worked well, now it's irredeemable." To make things more abysmal, Rall argues that if there were a collapse of the U.S. government and capitalism today without substitute institutions

waiting in the wings would lead to something even worse. The U.S. ultra-right is more organized and would decline us into a nightmare society. Anyone who was hoping industrial collapse would lead to a world of Ewok villages will be sorely disappointed to find themselves in something more like *The Road*, without Viggo Mortensen's handsome face to pass the time between starving.

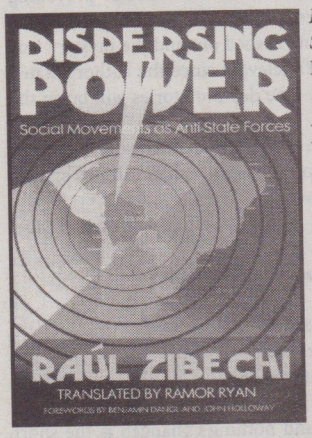
Rall's anger is tinged with a journalistically-stylized cleverness and he holds court on an array of comparative disappointments. The number of statistics cited seem better suited for a short article than a book at times, but some stick out like: ten percent of Americans hold 80 percent of the wealth, 164 nations have labor laws that require paid vacations for all workers, and 163 nations guarantee paid sick days, but, of course, not the U.S. And with the current statistical trends cited in his work, it seems quality of life will continue to decline.

Fifty pages into the book, one might get depressed about the state of things. I certainly did. Shortly thereafter, Rall had a section on why you shouldn't get depressed because this decline means everyone is pissed and ready for a major overhaul. At this moment, history is on our side. Instead of feeling incapacitated, he tells us we should act, and that's where things get a little confusing.

Overall, the book serves as strong guide to what people are angry about in the U.S. and how that anger is guided. Rall's advocacy of violent revolution is interspersed, but not given quite enough explanation. It's confusing that the book says collapse is around the corner and leads to something worse, but a violent revolution without qualification is necessary to solve our problems. He does well to explain why representative democracy and capitalism are drowning, but he doesn't give quite enough specifics on what a sustainable and non-threatening life boat might look like. The book is mostly about recent political failures, so it's not so important that he doesn't sound out an alternative, but the ideas repeated the most were violent overthrow and decentralization without qualification. I don't want to work with "racist skinheads in Idaho" or any other state really. They don't seem to like me very much, and yet, somehow his revolution at any costs would include cooperating with antagonistic people like them. Agonistic tolerance is a different argument that he doesn't touch on.

In the face of the atrocities to come, this is a quick and easily accessible book for those who are interested in catching up on the current political landscape, but the solutions offered here are left too vague to move one past outrage.

—Zane Grant



Dispersing Power: Social Movements as Anti-State Forces
Raúl Zibechi
161 pages • $15.95
AK Press
www.akpress.org

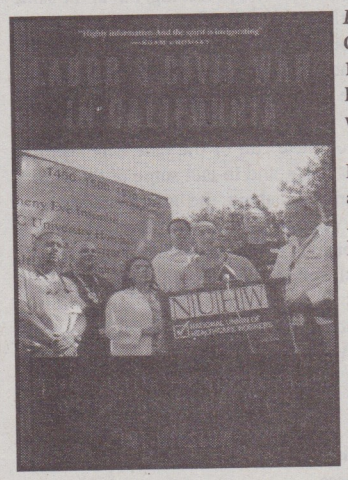
Popular discourse surrounding Bolivian politics and Evo Morales—"popular" in the loose sense of the word; he's no Justin Bieber, after all—seems to take the following two optimistic tracks: (1) isn't it something that a president has risen from the nation's vast indigenous population? and (2) isn't it something that a sovereign nation is taking steps towards actually existing socialism? Now, that's a gross oversimplification, but it gets at the heart of what many find when they look to Central and South American political developments: a sense of possibility, or urgency. John Holloway, in his preface to this book, the first English translation of the work of Uruguayan political theorist Raúl Zibechi, admits as much, heralding a reversal in "time-hope-space." Whether Zapatista or Chavista, Latin America holds a particular place in the political imaginary of Canada and the U.S.

However, this optimism masks the fundamental tension between the operating ethos of, say, Zapatismo and Chavismo, a tension I alluded to some months back in similar terms: one subversive, against the state, and one expansive, inside and at the reigns of state power. Zibechi, in this often-illuminating text, provides us with a vision of the conflict between these two tendencies inside Bolivia itself. Being one of those rare books whose thesis is right there in the title, Zibechi gives an account of the indigenous Aymara resistance movements in the city of El Alto, and how they constitute modes of political organization both outside and explicitly against even a leftist conception of the state. He argues for the validity and political potency of various and sundry social relations and practices that would seem to elude what we understand as 'politics', but which in actuality serve to—drum roll—"disperse power" such that it never crystallizes or ossifies into any dusty ol' representative body with its own hegemonic political class. The Aymara model, on the contrary, is fluid, spontaneous, and, seemingly both in principle and in practice, horizontal.

All of this is anecdotally interesting, and there's quite a bit of admirable verve in his defense of indigenous community practices against both neoliberalism and a leftist government that would dilute them into a "multicultural state." However, I'm inclined to say that these treatments add up to less than Zibechi thinks. For instance, there's an operating inconsistency in asserting that any given social practices are outside our current political idiom while also implicitly describing them as exemplary forms of, say, Deleuzian deterritorialization—Zibechi's preferred theoretical vocabulary. That is, if such socio-political practices are actually as explosive as Zibechi clearly thinks, wouldn't they elude even being thus described? Wouldn't we need new terms to get at how they work, rather than merely calling them, to point to another theoretical catchall Zibechi often employs, "deconstructive"? Further, while Zibechi details the myriad crimes and potential atrocities of state powers both neo-colonial and local, he never quite comes to an argument as to why rejection of the state form is an *a priori* good. I'll freely admit that this might simply be a question of Zibechi assuming an audience who's already come a certain distance into anarchist thought, but I think the issue garners new urgency if the power of 'dispersal' is his fundamental concern. For all the flexibility and potency attributed to the Aymara resistance, it's never quite clear to the reader how this would prevent a reversal of the equation, as in, say, the Palestinian case in which dispersal has become the explicit strategy of the occupying power, and the prospect of a state may be potentially fruitful in resisting that power. The circumstances are, I realize, fundamentally different, but they share that underlying question, and Zibechi's assessment leaves little room to address it.

Still, given these theoretical shortcomings, there's quite a bit to appreciate about Zibechi's work, and the possibility of further translations remains, based even solely on this book, tantalizing, particularly for his matter-of-fact treatment of what could be contentious issues. The late chapter, for instance, on "El Alto Justice," is a welcome provocation for those thinking seriously about building new forms of social organization. It raises the unpopular question of enforcement of norms within that alternate order, a field whose range of options among the Aymara run from public shaming to actual death sentences. This point may seem drastic or foreign to our concerns—and if we get to the point of anarcho-punk firing squads, we might want to tinker with our values just a bit – but its discussion unmasks as patently ridiculous any political thinker peddling easy liberation. Rethinking the elemental forms of social life is fucking *work*, and as a reader I'm grateful for Zibechi's blunt honesty in this regard.

—Maxwell Tremblay



Labor's Civil War In California
Cal Winslow
128 Pages • $12.00
PM Press
www.pmpress.org

Books like *Labor's Civil War In California* are both invigorating and depressing. Anyone following the state of the American labor movement knows that it is shambles, union density is low and victories are few in far between. There are of course moments of hope and triumph, and the story of the United Healthcare Workers-West (UHW) is certainly one of them. Sadly, UHW was not fighting the ownership of the hospitals where they work, but the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), which they used to belong to. That the labor movement is embroiled in internal battles is sad but the UHW does offer a glimmer of a different kind of union, a fighting one that is ready to stand strong and fight, even when they have to fight people who are supposed to be on the same side.

Cal Winslow is not without bias, and he makes this clear immediately: he supports UHW on his own but his daughter was an organizer and founding member of the union. The presence of bias actually makes this slim volume stronger. Although it's not clear that this book will reach the wide audience it deserves, it is not written in a way that will only appeal to leftists/union activists/anarchists/etc. Winslow's personal investment in what he is writing about makes the story come to life in a vivid and exciting way. Hopefully this book will be read by many people and serve as one of those rare inspiring books about contemporary American struggles that show there are parts of the labor movement that are still fighting in a meaningful way.

—Isaac Pirie

MOVIES

BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

THE MUSICIANS WERE GOOD, BUT ANOUSHKA WAS OFF AND FAKE

The title of the film **La Brune et Moi** is a play on the French name of the Jayne Mansfield film **The Girl Can't Help It**. **The Girl Can't Help It** was released in France as **La Blonde et Moi**. The stories of both films are similar. In **La Brune et Moi** a punk girl accidentally bumps into a businessman in the street. He is attracted to her. He follows her into a club and makes her an offer. If she will become his girlfriend he will give her anything she wants. At the time she blows him off, but later decides she will accept his offer. She wants him to make her a punk rock star.

Naturally, I immediately think aren't punk rockers supposed to make themselves into stars (or anti-stars)? Of course, someone will always point to Malcolm McLaren. But **La Brune et Moi** was made in 1980 not 1976. Hadn't that whole faux-Svengali thing been played out by then? Also, the businessman in **La Brune et Moi** hardly fits into that evil puppeteer stereotype. He genuinely seems to want to help her out. I'll assume there was a big difference in France at the time between being a punk star and being a rock star. The businessman is portrayed by Pierre Clémenti who has been in a variety of well-known films such as **Belle De Jour**, **The Conformist** and **The Leopard**.

The flimsy story of **La Brune et Moi** is simply there to showcase some of the French punk and new wave bands of the time. This is the reason to see the film especially from a historical perspective. The Dogs and Les Privés are fairly well known to American punk fans. Les Privés portray La Brune's (played by Anoushka) backing band. The other bands included are Edith Nylon, the Questions, Astroflash, Marquis de Sade and Go-Go Pigalles. Each band gets to perform a full song. The musical styles range from garage punk to synth new wave to rockabilly. The best performance is by the Questions who perform their song in the businessman's office while La Brune fantasies about her future stardom.

La Brune et Moi was released in 1980 and celebrates its 30th anniversary with the release of this DVD. Included with the film are interviews with director, producer, a member of the band Ici Paris and others. Unfortunately, there are no subtitles for these interviews and with my limited French, I barely know what was being said. Perhaps you will fare better. (www.lechatquifume.com)

La Peste are one of the best bands from Boston. Like most of the great bands from that city, they are barely known. They released one amazing single in 1978 before lead singer and guitarist Peter Dayton left to try his hand at a solo career. The band replaced him and continued on for a few more years before they broke up. I first heard La Peste on the radio during their brief existence, but I never got to see them live.

The DVD release of **La Peste Live Boston 1979** is the closest I will ever come to seeing this great band. The DVD doesn't state it, but after snooping around the website I believe this show was recorded at the Paradise Club. The show consists of eight songs shot on black and white video. There are two cameras capturing the band as well as the crazed dancing crowd. Everyone seems to be having a great time. The audio seems to be taken from a different show. It sounds to me as if it is from the Rat show that was broadcast on WBCN and appeared on La Peste's 1996 Matador record. The audio on this recording is of excellent quality and the syncing job with the video is almost flawless.

Also included on the **La Peste Live Boston 1979** DVD are six addition songs which have been made into videos including live footage, photographs, fliers and other unrelated footage. In addition there is an audio pix gallery, which shows more photographs and fliers while six more songs play. Although I would have preferred more live footage, I do enjoy reminiscing even if it's not completely my past. I am pretty sure I saw a picture of the late Billy Ruane rockin' out. A flier for a show at the Inn-Square Men's Bar reminded me that as a kid I always wanted to go there, but never got to since they closed in 1984. (www.kinodv.net)

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, PO Box 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146-0402. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. www.carolynkeddy.com

TREAT ME LIKE DIRT

AN ORAL HISTORY OF PUNK IN TORONTO AND BEYOND

1977 1981

LIZ WORTH

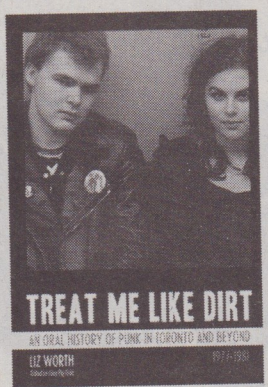
EDITED BY GARY PIG GOLD

This is the finest oral history of one punk scene I've ever seen. Given how little is generally known about what happened on the shores of Lake Ontario simultaneously to The Ramones, Sex Pistols, Saints, Weirdos, Avengers, etc., and how vital the big four (to New Yorkers then), The Viletones, Teenage Head, Diodes, and B-Girls were, **this book is actually more indispensable in telling a largely lost narrative.** (It also reinforces how 1977 punk's creative cultural freedom assault and visceral expression threatened just by existing, including a archetypal account of bouncers beating punks with pool cues for the transgression of dressing/thinking/acting differently!)

For this writer, reading of dimly recalled acts such as The Dishes, Ugly, Scenics, Simple Saucer, The Curse, Poles, etc., as well as the original Diodes-run 1977 Crash 'n' Burn club - and the bands' CBGB trips I do recall - had me staying up nights for weeks.

- JACK RABID, The Big Take Over

VILETONES, DIODES, B-GIRLS, TEENAGE HEAD, CURSE, POLES, FORGOTTEN REBELS, SIMPLY SAUCER, UGLY, ETC...



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1981 – "Faster and Forward" EP

Wow, surprise of the month! With its stark black-and-white graphics, circle-As and stenciled text, the sleeve of this Finnish EP looks like it's going to contain some fast anarcho hardcore punk, but as soon as I slapped it on the turntable I was blown away to hear jangling post-punk guitars. Staccato MINUTEMEN riffs underpin shouted vocals reminiscent of the EX, before slipping effortlessly into a mod/indie hook that sounds a lot like English band SCARFO. The flipside is more straightforwardly poppy, with nods to the JAM or SMALLTOWN. Overall the EP is pretty good, but the title track is the sure winner. I know one shouldn't judge a book (or record) by its cover, but the schism between the look of this record and how is sounds is quite striking. It's safe to say that a few people who would probably love this record will pass right by it in the stacks, which is their loss. At the same time, I'd love to be a fly on the wall when some gluehead gets this home expecting some blistering Finnish thrash… (AM)
(Passing Bells)

GG ALLIN AND ANTISEEN – "Murder Junkies" LP

My pal Mr. Roehrs would be proud I'm taking a crack at this. Recorded when ANTISEEN was at its prime, filled with Southern hostillity, and GG was poopin' it up, sportin' his little dope-filled wheenie for the world to see. I believe this is a comp of some tunes off the New Rose Records LP (minus the GG spoken word parts) but better sounding. I can't believe any self-respecting dirtbag punk hasn't heard this shit already but it comes on a spiffy picture disc (hate 'em!). Sooo, smash a pint a piss on your neighbor's head, take a big steaming poop and FTW! (RO)
(Rusty Knuckles)

THE AMBULARS – "Nothing to Say from Miles Away" EP

The first song on this record had me thinking I was getting into some boring ambient art shit. I'm not sure where that song came from or why it's on here, but the others are more up my alley—mid-tempo, catchy pop songs. One of them is a (somewhat sappy) song about what I can only guess is a girl. The other is about alienation from your town. All in all not bad, but the lyrics are a bit too poetic. (BD)
(Cosmic Debris)

AMEN 81 / NEIN NEIN NEIN – split LP

Both bands offer up six tracks apiece on this split, giving you a dose of what's going down in the contemporary German hardcore scene. AMEN 81 once again delivers some fast and driving hardcore not dissimilar to the material on all their other releases, which tends come across as a blend of clean, modern HC faintly informed by '80s political punk. NEIN NEIN NEIN have a style that reminds me a bit of SHOTMAKER and some of the more progressive bands of the '90s that never strayed from being hardcore while allowing their songs to branch out of the standard format. A worthy release all around, just don't get confused like I initially did with the "NEIN 81" on the cover (I thought it was some new band with a great name!). (BG)
(Twisted Chords)

ANAL WARHEAD – "Time to Die" EP

If I didn't know better, I would assume this was either a Cleveland band on Non-Commercial, or a project like MOTHERFUCKING TITTY SUCKERS. It's just so over-the-top punk, from the cover (a skeleton with charged hair about to hit a cop with a whiskey bottle), to the lyrics, even the super sloppy thrown-together insert. Sounds a lot like H-100S, not as deranged, but I don't think that's even possible. Five tracks of fast, sloppy hardcore played by scumbags from upstate New York. The name is stupid as hell, which of course means it's perfect. (AH)
(Suburban White Trash)

ANIMAL LOVER – "Garage Wolves/Patience"

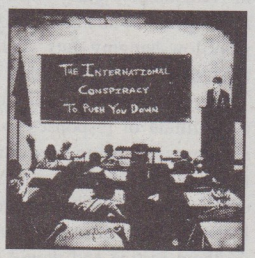
This lands somewhere in between bleak punk and Northwest-style hardcore but it's way more controlled than either of those things. It also has some early-'90s Touch & Go repetition to it. It's got the appropriate amount of fuzz and heaviness that I dig in records but lacks the chaos and desperation that makes me really flip. It's definitely doomy and hateful, but never really completely loses its shit. But I'm listening to it on repeat. But I kinda liked it better at 45 RPM though. But it's definitely really, really good. (MM)
(Bumpkin Pie, no info)

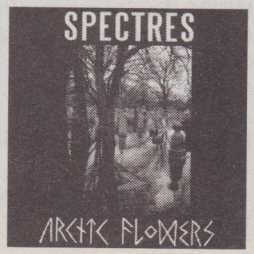
ANTI-EVERYTHING – "The International Conspiracy to Push You Down" CD

If you've absolutely never had any exposure to leftist politics, or if you've ever wished that ANTI-FLAG and STRIKE ANYWHERE would team up and go in an alterna-screamo direction with the occasional pretty part, then you might find a modicum of merit in this CD. Rather than singing about peak oil and other evils of the world (which aren't even reprinted in the insert), this band would've done a better service to the environment by not releasing future fodder for the North Pacific gyre, which will eventually be mistaken for plankton by marine life. (DG)
(Boatshrimp)

ANTI-SYSTEM – "Defence of Our Realm" EP

About time someone reissued the ANTI-SYSTEM records. One of my favorite anarcho bands, they had a driving punk sound not unlike AOA, ICONS OF FILTH or a less intense





DISCHARGE. Fiercely anti-war and pro-animal rights, members of the band served prison time for their animal activism. This type of stuff was the soundtrack to my youth, at a time when I believed change was going to happen, when the punks were going to rise up. This is the sound of revolution and is as fresh today as it was when I first heard it 25 years ago... (TB)
(Antisociety)

ARCTIC FLOWERS / SPECTRES – split EP

Two bands that have found a kindred spirit in each other. ARCTIC FLOWERS have been around for a little while now, and feature Stan from SIGNAL LOST among some other Northwest luminaries. Their song here builds ominously with a spooky bass riff before turning on a dime to a driving, melodic, guitar-driven punk anthem. Think SIGNAL LOST with more of a peace-punk influence, rather than hardcore. On the flip are Vancouver's SPECTRES. Up 'til now I've wanted to like this band more but felt that they were having a hard time escaping the shadow of their influences. On this song I think they've finally managed to tame the impulse for emulation and have pulled off something that sounds unique and truly their own, while still rooted in classic sounds of the past. The strains of dramatic goth-punk are still intact though; fans of eyeliner and dyed black hair needn't fret! Great record. (AM)
(Charged/Distorted)

THE ARRIVALS – "Volatile Molotov" LP

I don't even know where to begin here. I feel proud listening to this band. They have developed so notably as songwriters and musicians since their debut album—that, for the record, I still love, so that's in no way a disrespect. They've gone from being able to put together a fairly typical, yet solid 1-2-3-4! punk rock song in the space of two minutes, to constructing a mini-masterpiece. This is a series of relentlessly gutsy beats and riff-filled mini-rock-operas. Undeniably, *Volatile Molotov* is some giant-low-hanging-nuts rock, though at the same time, cleverly paired with a delicate pop sensibility. These tracks are lyrically unyielding, drawing on a multitude of responses to their everyday lives—responses to being the hardworking, hard-living, hard-fucking-drinking, socially, politically and emotionally aware Midwestern punks that they are. I can't compare them to anyone else, it wouldn't do them justice and would give the other an over-inflated sense of worth. I feel almost kinda bad I have to review this; I don't even know how to do it proper justice. Total gold. Buy this record. (GG)
(Recess)

BALBOA BURNOUT – "OKHC" CD

Maybe the title should be *OK Melodic HC*. Fast, tight, well-produced melodic punk that sounds right out of the '90s. From Germany, this is a mix of LEATHERFACE, TRAVIS CUT and HOT WATER MUSIC. Emo core with riffs galore. This is OK at best, as this style has been done to death. Vocals in German. (RL)
(Twisted Chords)

BERLIN BRATS – "Believe It or Rot (1973-1976)" CD

Well, I have to admit that I wasn't too familiar with the BERLIN BRATS... So I'm glad that I got the chance to check this out and review it! BERLIN BRATS were arguably amongst the first—if not *the* first—of the West Coast bands to come out of the LA/SF punk scenes!! Though their career as BERLIN BRATS was short-lived, two of the members went on to form the MAU MAUS who are a little more well known; however I prefer the BERLIN BRATS tracks on this retrospective CD compiled of bits and pieces from various demos and live recordings. Unfortunately all but five of these songs are live recordings with varying degrees of quality, but of the five "studio" tracks, this is brilliant stuff!! You can definitely hear the influences of the times with stuff like the ROLLING STONES, but done in a trashier way like the NEW YORK DOLLS were doing rock'n'roll. There are also similarities to the STOOGES and MC5 and eventually the DEAD BOYS as well... This stuff is pretty awesome nihilistic rock'n'roll and with the best song being titled "(I'm) Psychotic," that pretty much sums it up!! (ML)
(Ratchet Blade)

BHOPAL – "Age of Darkness" LP

Italy's BHOPAL play dark, metallic crust with a melodic edge, and they do so quite well. This is the kind of shit I usually just eat up. They even feature a member of MORTUARY DRAPE, one of my favorite Italian bands ever, which makes me even more inclined to get into them. Unfortunately for me, I picked up the insert and started reading the lyrics to the first song, "Bike Punk Apocalypse": "Hail slaves of the gasoline / Maves of the cars / Die for your knight! / I want to see the cars explode / I want to see the highways melt and burn / I want to see the bike punk apocalypse! / Soaking dioxide and full of hate / I will die peddling on your fucking traffic lane / Dozens die every week / Fight back 'cause this is a war!" As soon as I read this, it became a lot harder to take this seriously. The broken English I don't mind; many of my favorite bands write in less-than-perfect English (I'm looking at you, SARCOFAGO and GISM). But the trite, pseudo-apocalyptic take on ecological and political issues is really fukking played out at this point. It was old five years ago, and it's not a fresh approach now. Sometimes a formulaic lyrical approach can become a timeless classic, but in this case it's just a bore. The music here is written and played competently, but it doesn't stand out enough for me to want to keep listening regardless of the lyrics. (VX)
(Shove / Undislessed / Iconoclast)

BIRD'S MILE HOME – CD

Frustatingly (well, for me at any rate), the packaging accompanying this effort is pretty minimal. Like no address for the band. No song titles (though I did discover that there are fourteen ditties, which are even named on the disc itself). Instrumentation is also fairly spare, and semi-acoustic. Guitar, bass, percussion, harmonica, and a cello. But a pretty engaging brew it is. Reminds me of bits of TIM BARRY, *Wisconsin*-era CRUCIFUCKS (e.g. when they were getting a bit wistful and musical), the string-infused cabaret of RHYTHM ACTIVISM and an acoustic MOUNTAIN GOATS. All good things, which makes the lack of info/lyrics et al. all the more frustrating. I guess you'll just have to go the extra mile and a bit to track it down. (RK)
(Minor Bird)

BIRD'S MILE HOME – LP

Most of you fellow *MRR* readers will not like this album. But for those of you out there who won't stop reading this review upon first mention of "folk punk" we have something here for you. This is way more than folk than punk; in fact it's not all that punk at all. But it's gritty, it's raw and its really well orchestrated. The songwriting is good and the lyrics are thoughtful and poetic. In a musical genre dominated by really annoying kids and bands, this is feels fresh. Make no bones about it, this is *folk* music, but if you're on the lookout for the cutting edge of folk music, check out these Montana kids. (FS)
(Minor Bird)

BONECRUSHER – "We Are the Working Class" CD

Hell ya!! Is there really anything better than a new release from BONECRUSHER?? I think fucking not!!! It would be a statement of the obvious if I said that I loved this band, so I'll get straight to the point here. *This band can do no wrong!!* In my humble opinion, after numerous albums and probably hundreds of songs recorded and released, BONECRUSHER has a sound that is refreshingly original and unique. I mean, yeah, if you've heard one of these powerful and angry anthems full of venom and vitriol, then you've heard 'em all. *But...* if you are a fan of BONECRUSHER then you can't get enough of 'em!! This CD has eleven new songs and two newly recorded songs that were on the *Our Nations Burning* 10" EP from early last year and every one of these comes at you like a battering ram. The wall of guitars and bass slams into you and bowls you over like no other band out there. I think that the only other band in this genre that can come close to keeping pace with these guys would be WRETCHED ONES... And these guys aren't just a bunch of ugly mugs playing hard-as-fuck, anthemic punk rock—if you take the time to listen to the lyrics you will find an uplifting message of individual strength and independence within most of the songs. What more can you ask for? So what you waiting for?? Get off your ass and order this now!! (ML)
(Knock-Out)

BORED TO DEATH / CRIMINAL TRAP – split EP

Copenhagen's CRIMINAL TRAP is a perfect addition to that city's fine stable of '80s worshipping hardcore—equal parts DC, LA and NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS delivered with pure, untempered attitude. Sapporo's BORED TO DEATH is the most DC thing I've heard from Japan since TOTAL FURY, but these dudes are more bare-bones and seem less intent on simply recreating a bygone sound. Retro to be sure, but both of these bands bring heaps of positive energy to the party, and the result is infectious as all hell. Too Circle never disappoints... (WN)
(Too Circle)

BRAIN BANGER – "Munsoned" CD

The label that sent us this disc touts BRAIN BANGER's affinity for '90s grunge, but initially I'm just struck by this band's resemblance to DANZIG with dirtier guitars. I guess dirty guitars are kinda grunge... The guitar on all those early MUDHONEY records was super dirty. I like MUDHONEY. I'm still listening and the first song still sounds like

bad DANZIG. They start to play fast on the second tune, and the singer gets more melodic (he starts "singing" especially on the chorus "We're so jaded..."), but the music is still riding this middle road floating amongst grunge, alt rock and vaguely indie/punk influences. JESUS LIZARD guitar leads help me like this, but then the third song is a total stinker. Moving along, the last tunes get a bit artier and weird, a little darker too; if "Pay Attention" had started this release and I hadn't read the damned press sheet (my fault, not theirs, admittedly) I might have a different impression of this disc, as it's a really good tune. "Save" wraps the release and it seems like BRAIN BANGER tried to write a hit. It sounds like a commercial heavy alt rock song given the treatment by some young bucks. It will not be a hit because it is not very good. BRAIN BANGER are dudes from YOUNG WIDOWS, LORDS, BLACK CROSS amongst others, they are from Kentucky. (WN)
(Hawthorne Street)

THE BROKEDOWNS – "Species Bender" CD

Big, loud and proud punk from the city with the big shoulders. Chi-town likes its punk barrel-chested and broad, and these hairy bears certainly measure up to these expectations. It's got that Midwest love for DILLINGER FOUR whilst injecting some NEGATIVE APPROACH menace without sounding hardcore at all. Even a slight PIXIES vibe seeps through the manly butt, punch and a boot to the face punk rock. It's smart but still primitive enough to start a pit fight, whilst having enough charm and with to entice the ladies in for a quick slam dance or two. The ARRIVALS on steroids. Great. (SD)
(Red Scare)

JOE BUCK / FLAT TIRES – split EP

Satisfyingly dirty live recordings, FLAT TIRES do something akin to what used to be called "cowpunk" but done right as it seldom was/is. I'd love to hear these guys do MEL TILLIS' "I Got the Horse (She Got the Saddle)" (a great song that deserves a version with some umph!). JOE BUCK seems to be a one-man band that adds a tasty dollop of primitive rockabilly to his agitated delivery. Good shit all around. (DD)
(Rusty Knuckles / Cockfight)

BURNING SONS – "Masquerade" EP

Dirty, ugly punk rock'n'roll from Milwaukee. BURNING SONS open with "Masquerade," a lurching tune infected with enough musical raunch to last for the whole single, but the rest of this is a stumbling freight train burning its candle at both ends. The vocal snarls on "Conquest" are reminiscent of the '80s hardcore that Mystic is well known for (this is the first Mystic release in 20 years...wow), set to a pimple-inducing teenage DISCHARGE riff that would make Bones proud. Just fukkn punk, played by dudes old enough to *know* how to do it right...but apparently young enough at heart to pull it off. (WN)
(Mystic)

BUST – "Suck Kuts" 10"

BUST is a guitar-and-drums combo from Northern Illinois, who plays a fast and distorted version of melodic punk. Much faster and more abrasive than most pop bands, that's for sure. Their style is in line with a Recess Records type of sound (TOYS THAT KILL is the first band that comes to mind) although BUST plays it with the urgency of MARKED MEN and has a RITES OF SPRING vocal approach. Fast, catchy, blown-out and just a little emo. A few of these songs rock pretty hard—they've got a good thing going on. (FS)
(Cassette Deck)

CARGO CULT / TEXAS BISCUIT BOMBS – "Two-Headed Cobra" 2xLP

Damn, this shit is impressive: two full LPs of Texas punk bands fronted by the late Randy "Biscuit" Turner! First up, we have CARGO CULT, which combined the forces of Biscuit with Duane Denison, who later went on to play in JESUS LIZARD. This LP is unreleased demos they recorded for an LP that was to be released on Touch and Go back in the '80s. It combines the instantly recognizable voice of the BIG BOYS with fucked-up guitar work and '80s production that makes it sound like an instant classic. Every song is no less than amazing, except maybe "Meanest Man Alive." Really...who can imagine Biscuit singing a song about how he is an incredibly mean man and find that believable? It is a crime that these songs have not had a proper release for about 25 years. Next up is TEXAS BISCUIT BOMBS, which fast-forwards us to the years 2003-2005 and finds Biscuit and his backing band to be just as urgent, tight and manic as they ever were. Unfortunately, the majority of the songs contained herein are culled directly from their back catalog. This LP consists almost entirely of the band doing live versions of songs by the BIG BOYS, DICKS, MINUTEMEN, ZZ TOP (the same song twice), REALLY RED and others. I really wish that they had more original material because I'm a big fan of moving forward and not languishing in nostalgia. Still, this LP is a good document of the last days of Biscuit Turner and I'm glad it exists. I would buy it just for the CARGO CULT LP. It comes with extensive liner notes, bright full color covers, and twenty 8x11 reproductions of old fliers. (GH)
(Modern City)

CHESTY MALONE AND THE SLICE 'EM UPS / REASON TO FIGHT – split EP

Once again, United Riot Records brings you a one-two sucker-punch of East Coast hardcore that'll knock you on yer ass!! REASON TO FIGHT from Providence, Rhode Island, and CHESTY MALONE (AND THE CUT YOU UPS) from Queens, NY, team up on this jam-packed five-song 7" EP. REASON TO FIGHT kicks the EP off with two songs that are a bit more straightforward and mid-tempo and actually quite catchy! The song "Hard Working, Hard Drinking, Hardcore" is an anthem for all blue-collar, working-class people no matter what kind of music that you're into, punk or not. On the flipside of this slab-o-wax is CHESTY MALONE, and man, they really rip it up! This is actually a "harder" hardcore with some pretty heavy, chugging guitar riffs, staccato attack drumbeats, plenty of tempo changes and breakdowns and vocals that shred courtesy of CHESTY herself!! Overall, this EP has something for everyone, so if you're a fan of HC you should definitely check this out! (ML)
(United Riot)

CHINESE BURNS – "Rohypnol" 45

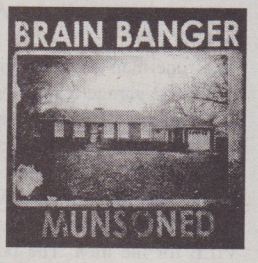
This single is one-sided, has four notes, three lyrics, costs (I'm guessing) around $6.50 ppd (which is how much 45s cost in 2010), but enough with the numbers—it's decent and actually quite good in that it makes me want to see this band live, which is where I'm sure a song like this would really come across. This is the most by-the-book review I've ever given and I don't know whether or not that reflects badly on the record, but if you buy new records why not buy this one? (BB)
(Leather Bar)

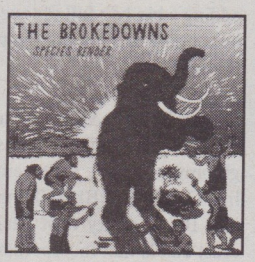
THE CLEARER – "Storm" EP

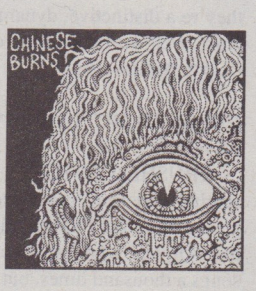
Swaggering '90s emo-rock with nods to JAWBREAKER and LUNGFISH, unnecessarily complex drum patterns and "quiet/loud/quiet" dynamics, mastered with tedious clarity by Bob Weston. I have a lot of time for both JAWBREAKER *and* LUNGFISH, but I doubt I'll listen to this again. (AM)
(Forge)

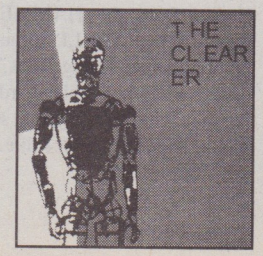
COKE BUST – "Lines in the Sand" CD

Many bands attempt a mixture of hardcore punk's various sub-genres, but I think few have succeeded as well as COKE BUST, who really stand out from the majority of their peers.









The songs here are a seamless blend of grinding blast-beats, simple and fast punk, and early straight edge youth crew like *Can't Close My Eyes*-era YOUTH OF TODAY or PROJECT X, topped off with seething, antisocial vocals. On this CD, you get the excellent, seventeen-song *Lines in the Sand* LP and sixteen equally compelling tracks, including the *Fuck Bar Culture* 7," the full demo, a comp track, and a FAITH cover. So don't sleep! You need this. (JH)
(Six Weeks)

JOHN WESLEY COLEMAN – "Bad Lady Goes to Jail" CD

A one-man show ranging from some straight-up fuzzed garage to more reflective JOHNATHAN RICHMAN or TV SMITH moments. The production is understated in the best possible way, whilst being carried along with abundant quality in the songwriting department. A less serious, more up-tempo KURT VILE or maybe more like a KURT VILE for the men. The bongos on track five have pushed it right over the edge and that's how's I like my rack'n'roll. TY SEGALL minus the booze and adding a big bag full of loveygubbley class-As. I will be rocking this one for a long time. (SD)
(Goner)

COUNTERBLAST – "Faceless" EP

This underrated Swedish band is back with a gloomy new 10". In general, I think I have tried to like COUNTERBLAST more than I actually do, but this 10" is pretty cool. Here at *MRR* we get many crust bands that incorporate melody into their sound and it just comes off saccharine. COUNTERBLAST do this in a tasteful way, a way that doesn't compromise their distinctive, dark vibe. I'd like to think this melody and vibe are the influence of AMEBIX and AXEGRINDER but I suppose CULT OF LUNA and ISIS are just as likely (if not more) to be the main source of inspiration here. Tepid post-hardcore leanings aside, this EP has a cool vibe with the characteristic use of samples and industrial sounds. COUNTERBLAST has deep, almost deathly growls with plenty of soul. I guess some consider this band death/doom, which seems somewhat accurate but I've always heard them as crust with doom and industrial death elements. Regardless, they're a distinctive, dynamic band in the history of crust. Well worth checking out. (DB)
(Alerta Antifascista)

CRUSHED BUTLER – "It's My Life/My Son's Alive"

CRUSHED BUTLER's two best songs on a 45, sparing you from having to buy that LP, which is great and all but I haven't listened to it since it came out. Anyone who knows anything has heard these songs a thousand times, but if you want to hear them again pretty bad you can buy this record. By the way, if you are a fucking retard piece of shit this is Jesse Hector from the HAMMERSMITH GORILLAS (later just the GORILLAS) and the father of my third favorite genre, "Thug Rock." This is from 1970, so people who like Finnish hardcore might not like it—but they will in three years, so you can sell them this reissue for $15 then. It's like an investment. Think of the future. (BB)
(Windian)

CÜLO – "Military Trend" EP

This ripper will soon be filed under my "this fuckin' rules!" category, never to be picked out during a desperate purging of the shelves. Listening to this gives me comfort in knowing that the torch of straight-up, yet distinctive hardcore is being passed along through good hands. These dudes throw down fast and frantic traditional HC that sounds like a bit of JERRYS KIDS mixed with Italian hardcore and a dose of fucking whatever it is that sounds just right to these ears. Four tracks and all of them are amazing. And now I'm getting that strange record collector sensation that my life will hereby be incomplete until I track down a copy of this EP for myself. Get this! (BG)
(Deranged)

DANGER! MAN – "The Blame Game" LP

These Norwegian dudes play fast melodic hardcore that at times also sounds kinda like OXYMORON. Hmm, not sure what else to say. I think I hit the nail right on the head there. If you're into polished/high-production-value hardcore, you'll probably be into this. (BD)
(Boss Tuneage / Sjakk Matt Plater)

DEAD RADICAL / REPUBLICORPSE – split EP

Scranton, PA's DEAD RADICAL plays a style of fast, spastic hardcore that in a previous era might have been dubbed by the name of the odious not-quite-a-real-subgenre of "screamoviolence": fast and spastic with oddly angular twists and turns, nasally vocals and vaguely off-putting lyrics. At times they remind me of IN/HUMANITY or GUYANA PUNCHLINE. If you dug their side of the split LP with SIDETRACKED, you'll dig this, too. These are the last tracks they recorded before calling it a day. On the flipside is Orlando, FL's REPUBLICORPSE, also turning in their swan song recording. These dudes play in a pretty straightforward powerviolence vein in the style of CROSSED OUT et al. Good shit; not original by any means but more than passable. I wish I'd had a chance to see either band before they split, but them's the breaks. (VX)
(Give Praise)

DEAD SWAMP / KING MASTINO – split EP

The DEAD SWAMP effort is solid, but leaves me a little unimpressed. It's that sort of WIPERS/PEGBOY/HÜSKER DÜ "whoaaa whoooaaa" type punk, which is very hit or miss for me. The sound is full and the songs are solid, but something is missing. Substitute "KING MASTINO" for "DEAD SWAMP," above, to see what I think about the KING MASTINO tracks. Limited to 300. (KK)
(Surfin' Ki / Pantano)

DEATH – "Spiritual, Mental, Physical" CD

I have heard friends write off this Detroit band's much praised proto-punk record, *For the Whole World to See*, because "only the 45 was any good—the rest of the LP was just filler." I agree that the 45 contains the jams, but totally enjoy that entire LP. It makes me think of *Dogtown* or *Dazed and Confused*, but instead of mustang driving white bro jock jams, these sounds were created by inner city African American rockers... Their music creates movies in my head. *Spiritual, Mental, Physical* is a collection of outtakes and rough demos recorded between 1974 and 1976 that totally reaffirms my love for this band, raw and unfinished and amazing. "Taking a look at the DEATH engine from under the hood," to paraphrase band member Bobby Hackney, Sr. The first three songs are motor city rippers, drenched in the sounds of Detroit; rock'n'roll dissected and investigated: What is a fan? What is the BEATLES?! Then there's a tape-loop-enhanced jam for the future... Most of the songs on this are not spaced-out jams though, but focused dancefloor stompers, explorations of what it meant to be a rock'n'roller in the face of those that would settle for the conventional. This band is exciting to listen to, their music is *transportational*, meaning to say it removes the listener from the staidness of their surroundings and takes them somewhere else, where another world seems possible... Best listened to with headphones! Primal, true transcendent—what rock'n'roll was supposed to achieve. People have the power! (LG)
(Drag City)

DEATHRAID – "All Life Ends" LP

D-beat! I might not need to write anything other than that one word for this review. D-beat! This is the second full-length from this Seattle band formed from members of DISRUPT, STATE OF FEAR and CONSUME. OK, I'll write a little more. This is a modern D-beat hardcore sound with few other influences other than some rock'n'roll. There is the usual collection of "war is horrible" lyrics, some of them hard-hitting, like on "Give In." "Lay Down All Hope" has a rock'n'roll sound, almost death'n'roll and in this case I really dig it. "Citizen Scapegoat" has a bass-line that reminds me of "Ace of Spades." By now I think you've decided if want to listen to D-beat or crust, but either way I'd suggest checking this release out. (MH)
(Agipunk)

DECAY AFTER DEATH – "Pist and Poor" CD

This rules. This is total Mariam (that's me) core. It's a perfect mix of punk, rock'n'roll and early metal. It's driving and fast with speed-metal stops (before crossover became super grind-y) then launches into menacing dark chord progressions and some wanky solos. The vocals and guitars take front seat here; the drums and bass are pretty straightforward, but both are solid. This is like reinvented best-of-Swedish-hardcore smashed with MOTÜRHEAD and some MOTLEY CRÜE...when they were good. It sounds like NIGHT FEVER mixed with DAYGLOW ABORTIONS with screamy, pissed hardcore vocals in the John Brannon family. Nice. Can't wait to hear more from this band. Chicago punk rules! (MB)
(So-Called)

DEEP SHIT – "Creepin' While You Sleepin'" EP

This thing is like the CB4 version of PLUTOCRACY and the whole West Bay Coalition scene. All the lyrics are written from a thugged-out point of view, but I don't get as much of a "dudes you don't want to fuck with" vibe from it. Musically it's very similar to the aforementioned band—a little more straightforward, but still pretty whacked out shit. The first half of side one is taken up by a PROJECT PAT style rap track, and the cover is in the classic No Limit Records style. All in all this is a decent record recommended for fans of the classic powerviolence sound. (AH)
(Give Praise)

DELTA FORCE II – "First Blood Part 2, A.K.A. Personal Vietnam" LP

There is a lot of shit I could talk on the stupid "thrash metal" scene that is going on right now in America but since these guys are from Finland I will give them the benefit of the doubt and assume that they aren't typical of the small-dick, no-brain douchebag weekend-warrior scumfuck assholes running around whose idea of metal is wearing a bandana, playing weak guitar riffs, and raping passed out teenagers after the show. The music is pretty much what you'd expect from punks crossing over to thrash à la MUNICIPAL WASTE and their legion of imitators. Frankly I found it more exciting when I accidentally started it on 45 RPM. I don't have any idea what these guys are singing about as it's in Finnish (as are the lyric sheets and MySpace page) but a couple song titles are in English like "Personal Vietnam," "Top Chef," "Ultimate Fighter" and "SP Metal Rules OK" so maybe you can draw some conclusions from that. If you're into this kind of thing you would probably like them as they are competent musicians, sound pissed off and have a lot of tattoos. And they do a POISON IDEA cover. (BL)
(Hockey Camp / Nightstick Justice / Roku / Raakanaama)

DELTA FORCE II / ESCAPE TO DEATH – split EP

DELTA FORCE II's vocals are a dead ringer for those of VITAMIN X (albeit with reverb), which is skewing my ability to judge the rest of the music independently, but I'd say it's middle-of-the-road modern thrashy hardcore with neo-crossover leanings and wah-wah moments. I'd much rather listen to early MUNICIPAL WASTE if I wanted to hear this sort of thing. ESCAPE TO DEATH plays timeless suburban hardcore punk that reminds me a lot of NO CONTEST from New Jersey, but a bit better. I may be way off the mark, but their side makes me picture alienated kids that just picked up skateboards and the first GORILLA BISCUITS 7" and realized that they want to think for themselves and not follow the flock (or crew). ESCAPE TO DEATH side wins. (DG)
(Hockey Champ / Nightstick Justice / Evil Corporation / Raakanaama)

THE DESTRUCTORS – "101010" EP

This British punk band that dates back to the '80s drops the "666" and returns to their original name. A ten-song EP that includes covers of the GODFATHERS and CHELSEA. Brit punk along the ways of the old No Future and Riot City record labels. A fine release from these punk vets. (RL)
(Rowdy Farrago)

DESTRUCTORS – "Helloween" CD

This band seems to have a CD out every month. One of the second (or third) tier UK82 bands that reformed a few years back. Nothing they have done over recent years has excited me and this is no real exception. Concept album of horror-themed songs played by a bunch of blokes who haven't moved too far away from their early '80s roots, they just got better at their instruments and made their sound slicker. This sounds like what PETER AND THE TEST TUBE BABIES have been doing recently. Mid-tempo straight-up punk rock. Bored me to tears… (TB)
(self-released)

DEVOTOS – "Victoria" LP

This Brazilian outfit has been actively playing since the '90s. Upon listening to this record you get a sense of playfulness that happens with many that do music for a long time. In all honesty this playfulness can be quite cheesy. The band throws in some reggae amongst other styles in their punk. Lyrically the DEVOTOS seem sincere and quite positive from what I gather in translating their Portuguese to my Spanish. Again, you like fusion in your hardcore than go for it. (MS)
(Mass Prod)

THE DIMAGGIO CONNECTION – "The Route of Time" CD

Watery, generic rockabilly drivel performed by three freakin' I-talian cats, one of which looks like Kevin Rowland's twin brother. This CD promises "nine brand new songs plus five crowd favorites!" I don't know what crowd would favor any of these songs. Think more Pussy Army than TIGER ARMY. (GG)
(Musical Brain)

DISGUST / EXTINCTION OF MANKIND – "Power Corrupts" CD

I kind of lost track of EXTINCTION OF MANKIND after *The Nightmare Seconds* LP which didn't have any tracks that really grabbed me, though I remain a fan of their early EPs and the massive *Baptized in Shit* LP. This new material might just bring me back into the fold, though. Energetic mid-to-up-tempo crust with some nice chugging riffs and a really fucking fun ENGLISH DOGS cover reconfigured to the EXTINCTION OF MANKIND style. Much like later DOOM, this might be hit-or-miss but these three songs really hit the spot. I came into the DISGUST half with high hopes, as I quite enjoyed the *War Deterrent* CD, and they didn't disappoint. The vocals are so guttural and sick sounding (literally sick, like the dude has a terrible chest cold), a perfect compliment to their vicious basic crust assault. They tend to have a problem with pointlessly long intros, a tradition they continue on the dirge-y "All Day Hell," but otherwise this is solid fast, modern metallic crust. (AU)
(MCR Company)

DISSIPED – "Viva La Crapula" 10"

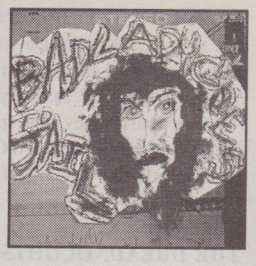
This band is from France but I think has Finnish dudes in it? Nevertheless, DISSIPED worships the Scandi-sound and they do it pretty damn well. It sounds drunk, it sounds loud, noisy, with enough sloppiness to make it somewhat charming. The vocalist even does the lazy singing—you know, where it sounds like his tongue is twelve pounds and he could bite it off at any second. This would have made a better 7", though, and I could totally do without the covers, especially "Banned from the Pubs"—so tired. (MS)
(Paska)

THE DITCH – "Ghost Audience" CD EP

Ghost Audience starts out promising enough with a typical youth-crew-style intro transitioning directly into a driving mid-speed riff as opposed to the fast part you'd expect. That style holds throughout the rest of the six-track EP—the DITCH has an almost lighthearted interpretation of the tried-and-true early Revelation sound but also relies heavily on slower, measured tempos and rockin' parts. The band is French but sings in English, perhaps losing something in the translation; the singer has a heavily accented spoken delivery that's so prominent that it's distracting until you get used to it. Probably fun live if youth crew is your thing. (CS)
(Crapoulet / Vitamin Bomb / Guerilla Vinyl)

DOG COMPANY – "A Bullet for Every Lie" LP

So like FLATFOOT 56 and equally shitty, possibly religious and nationalistic bands, this record is awful with borderline sketchy lyrics and boring street-punk-101 meets watered-down radio Oi. It's uninspired cookie-cutter punk with none of the vibrancy or spontaneity that it's meant to mimic. Curiously, the production is pretty good. The vocals are a weird, terrible, sing-songy, gruff wannabe tough, like a tone-deaf DWIGHT YOAKAM with one-sixteenth the talent; the guitar sound is equally annoying and distracting, electric with all the depth cut out; the onesheet compares them to a bunch of classic bands, one being VICE SQUAD…no fucking way. These dudes are a self-proclaimed "political" band and while their song "Magic Pill" about the pharmaceutical industry is sort of interesting, the



rest just seems like uneducated teabagger shit (with one song about stalking a young skinhead woman…I am gonna burn all my Ben Shermans…). I get that you're pissed and sexually frustrated, but channel some of that money you spend on those traditional tattoos and buy some good Oi and instrument lessons to show you the way. (MB)
(Contra)

THE DREADNOUGHTS – "Polka's Not Dead" CD

I was always biased against polka. Largely 'cos the main protagonist of the Robin Williams DJ character in *Good Morning Vietnam* was an advocate of a good polka. Never fear, the DREADNOUGHTS take a heady sampling of European folk traditions—polka, klezmer, sea shanties, rambling English folk, continental chanson—with all the requisite instruments—accordion, mandolin, violin, banjo, bouzouki—and turbocharge it with glorious bass, drums, and electric guitar, and well, give it a welly. Very, very impressive. If you like what the REAL MACKENZIES did to trad Scottish folk music or FLOGGING MOLLY did to the Irish canon, you'll flip out to these rousing renditions of the Central and Eastern European folkiness. And JACQUES BREL on steroids and speed. I'm a convert! Fucking brilliant. (RK)
(Stomp)

ELECTRIC FUNERAL – "D-Beat Noise Attack/ Make a Change" LP

As the title suggest, this is pure, raw D-beat noise. All high-end, drum tracks recorded in a walk in freezer on tin cans, simplistic and formulaic riffs lifted from DISCLOSE demos, lyrics about war and anguish and plights and confusion, guitars almost impossible to find under swirling waves of hiss. Yeah…I know—it's *that* good!! This slab compiles the *D-Beat Noise Attack* and *Make a Change* demo tapes released earlier this year, and if this is your shit then you can not ask for better. (WN)
(Shogun)

THE EX-BOYFRIENDS – "Never Been Happier" CD

This is a horrible confusion of poor vocals, rockabilly, glam, indie rock and screeching, overly distorted guitars on otherwise weak tracks. I'm not sure who such a poor mix of differing styles is supposed to appeal to. Maybe those weirdos—come on, there is always one at nearly every show, you know it—who dance crazily to anything and are most likely tripping balls and/or homeless. Your guess is as good as mine. (GG)
(Cash-Fork)

FEJLFIX – "Langsom Død" EP

Best thing I'm reviewing this month. This Danish band plays in a style that falls somewhere between raw, riff-driven, early-'80s Scandinavian HC and the more melodic side of early-'80s US hardcore. These songs are played speedy and tight, with simple yet inventive song structures, and the noisy recording with the scuzzy bass tone high in the mix gives this record a legitimately classic sound. This would go well on a mixtape between HHH and FACE UP TO IT. (DG)
(Spaghetti Cassetti)

FINAL BOMBS – "There Is No Turning Back" CD

Long running Japanese DISCHARGE worship given the MOTÖRHEAD treatment, with excellent results. Basically, this sounds like later DISCHARGE through the ears of Tokyo ragers who have spent years reinterpreting the work of the masters...but more metal and with surreal, high-pitched, sneered vocals. Total fist-banging for 24 minutes, and then it's over. Awesome. (WN)
(H:G Fact)

FLATTBUSH – "Otomatik Attak" CD

Fast as fuck technical grind, with lyrics in Tagalog. It's more of a metal record than a hardcore one, but I'm sure would appeal to some grind fans that don't mind production this slick. Their sound is pretty eclectic, not as down-tuned as I'd expect for the genre, and incorporates funk influences in a way that actually sounds decent. (DG)
(Koolarrow)

FREEDOM ASSAULT – "Welcome to 1984" EP

It's great when a band comes along that just plays punk rock and doesn't really go for a scene or subgenre—just a bunch of people cranking out some jams. This band fits somewhere in the '80s hardcore school of thought: sloppily fast and thrashy at times with simple hooks and generalized sociopolitical punk lyrics. The dueling male/female vocal style is probably what I like most about the band and the faster stuff is better. The record is a "split" with the band's not-so-slick recordings from their early years in Maine on one side and later material from years later when they reformed in Arizona with a different lineup. The Arizona side is much better; the early stuff is pretty undeveloped and generic with the band seeming to find itself a bit more later on. With some focus and a steady lineup this band has a lot of potential. (BL)
(Resisting Arrest)

FRESH AND ONLYS – "Tell Me What You Want To Know/Nothing Ever Happens"

FRESH AND ONLYS are 2010 College Rock—I dropped out of Community College in 2008 so I may not be the right reviewer for this new 45 by them (their 3,594th, which by my last count surpasses the BLANK DOG by about eighteen 7"s), but I've heard a lot of records before—this is pop music, and it's OK. I think they already have a pretty established fanbase, so I'm not sure this review will swing anyone either way. This is not their best record, and if you read those words you might gather that I have not only heard FRESH AND ONLYS records before, but you might even go out on a limb and read that I *own* a couple of them and this isn't as good as either of those. But it's not bad. (BB)
(HoZac)

FRONT – "Zur Lage Der Automation" CD

This band has a refreshing sound and style. Unfortunately they only employ it on about half the songs on this CD. The album opens with a couple of tracks featuring guitars that evoke a punk FRANZ FERDINAND and ranting, shouty Germanic vocals reminiscent of the RONDOS. These songs march along determinedly, like a thousand jackbooted stormtroopers. When the group sticks to this style, they are on to a winner. Unfortunately a few tracks are played at a faster "pop-punk" pace, and coupled with the herky-jerky guitar style, they invite unfavorable comparison to the HIVES. Still, it's not enough to put me off the band completely: I *loved* at least half the record. The blank, unemotional vocals and chicken-scratch guitars are particularly striking. Standout tracks are the first two, "Stil & Kultur" and "Prada Meinhof," "Leuchtfeur," and "Risikofaktor 1:X," which is a cover of the band MALE. I'm considering FRONT a band to keep an eye on. (AM)
(Twisted Chords)

FRUSTRATION – "Repetition" EP

This is something else… It's melodic, but it's rockin'. It's got crusty-ish, raspy, LEATHERFACE-meets-CRIMINAL-DAMAGE vocals. From Seattle and it's like pretty music for ugly people… The long-lost soundtrack to *Mad Max*. The music is mid-tempo, melancholy, dark rock with punk flavor. The tracks are longer than most punk songs, but it's cool, cuz it's rockin' enough to carry it, like a crusty/more punk P.R.O.B.L.E.M.S. but not as catchy. The guitar solos aren't overly wanking, yet have some level of technical stuff without losing a really awesome simplicity. The bass-lines are similar in balance. Shit… So are the drums. Someone who heard me listening to this said it's boring, but to me it sounds like dudes that have played in other, heavier bands (which they have, but I am not doing the "ex-member" thing…), but they are playing with sincerity and playing what they want to hear, not what anyone else wants to. They don't have shit to prove. You will either love it or hate it, but you should definitely check it out. (MB)
(Inimical)

FUCK KNIGHTS – "The Recorded by Gary Burger from the Monks EP" EP

These guys must have been psyched to have a MONK recording this four-track scorcher, for it gave them the opportunity to show that the spirit of stomping and driving garage rock is still alive and strong in 2010! FUCK KNIGHTS lean heavily towards the *Budget Rock* type of fast and drunken lo-fi rock'n'roll, but also include some bits and pieces of melody and appealing guitar work to bring it up a notch. And with titles like "Baby Get Lost" and "Don't Exist," you know you're in for a good time when you throw this thing on at a party. Worth checking out if you dig wild '60s beat-punk-style bands like the OMENS or just about anything on In The Red label. (BG)
(Crustacean)

FULL OF FANCY – "Liquid Nature + The Singles" CD

How practical—this band's new full-length plus all their vinyl releases tacked on. Shades of Captain Oi. This gal vocal-ed band varies from bubblegum to RAMONES-style punk to BLAKE BABIES-type indie rock. It's charming and they dish out the witty lyrics as well; for example, "To lose my mind like an apple cored / You drive me to drink and pray to the lord." Right on, sister! From Jersey, not quite the UNLOVABLES but in the ballpark. (RL)
(Don Giovanni)

GASMASK TERRÖR – "Black Sun/Fake Gold" LP

The second French raw hardcore record in my

hands this month—I guess my bribes to the bosses are starting to pay off! GASMASK TERRÖR dishes out eleven songs of pure, distorted, high-end punk fukkn rock without any of the trappings that might turn you off to the current wave of noise punkers taking over the streets with their mysterious shoestring headbands. This shit here don't need echo-drenched vocals to do the trick; GASMASK TERRÖR lets their Swedish riffs and garbage-can snare drum do the talking, and then peak the mix with high-end crunch on the guitars competing with a white cymbal wash and extra skull-shattering attitude from the singer. They frequently slow the pace to a steady fist-banging tempo and let the songs really shine—everything here will get stuck in your head for days…and don't even get me started on the solos (there aren't many, but they are perfect). Love it. (WN)
(I Feel Good / Solar Funeral)

GERIATRIC UNIT – "Audit of Enemies" LP

A fifth—*fifth*—GERIATRIC UNIT LP since 2007 might push the limits of what's really necessary. I mean, this is a planet with limited resources…and this band is working with a good but limited set of ideas that's tempered by and/or predicated on basically delivering the same tried and true over and over again fast hardcore. Somewhere between the straight-ahead ramcharge of mid-'80s UK HC like RIPCORD or later HERESY (with whom they share a band member) and the bit more frantic, more modern attack of say, '90s-'00s bands that sound later inspired like BOXED IN. Of course these UK hardcore and sludge veterans deliver another solid, punishing dose of fast to faster blurring thrash with BLACK FLAG-style guitar turns and thoughtful, personal lyrics… But like the vortex SEEIN RED seems to have dropped into, I can't see why you'd reach for this over their other, totally good records. An '80s-ish hollow core in the recording lessens the potential impact it might have had if the guitar tone was a bit more filled out. Aside from Japanese lyric translations, there doesn't seem to be an attempt to really do anything different from the other records, push a barriers or evolve—and if you're going to do albums in such rapid succession you either need to do that, or mete them out every five to seven years like GAUZE or something, so returning to the band is refreshing in and of itself. A band worthy of support, well intentioned, well played and solid; canning this makes me feel like I just kicked a puppy, but just because you can doesn't always mean you should. (KS)
(Boss Tuneage)

GIVE – "Boots of Faith" EP

I saw GIVE on tour in San Francisco about a year ago. Like LION OF JUDAH (they were on tour together and I believe they also share members), GIVE draws on a variety of post-hardcore sounds, such as *Salad Days*-era MINOR THREAT, Revolution Summer acts like RITES OF SPRING, and late '80s melodic hardcore such as SWIZ. While LION OF JUDAH has a progressive hardcore sound (fast and slow parts and lots of tempo changes breaking them up), GIVE are more melodic and, at least on the B-side, a lot poppier. As someone who doesn't listen to many of the above-mentioned bands, but who enjoys hardcore punk, pop music, and lots in between, I think this is an excellent release with a lot to offer anyone with an interest in these older bands or just an open mind. Highly recommended. (JH)
(Deranged)

HAIL SEIZURES – "For the Ruin" CD

This album rules. This has to be one of the best acoustic punk records to come out all year. HAIL SEIZURES brings to mind the styling of DOG FACED HERMANS, the EX and RED HERRING. The music is original and infectious, and the lyrics are smart and powerful. The song "Daddy" stopped me in my tracks. Felt like I was hit by a car. These Olympia peace punks really have something to say, and it's inspiring. I don't know what else to say—if you're into acoustic punk whatsoever, it is important you hear this. (FS)
(self-released)

HELLKONTROLL – "Wanker War" 10"

Well, it's been a month and I still love this record. There are a few nuances I failed to mention when I wrote about it earlier, like the eerie experimental noise track "Frustration" and how just really well done this "bad" recording is. Sure, it's blown out as fuck but the chorus vocals sound *huge* and nothing ever gets lost in the mix, even with all the distortion and fuzz that plays such an integral part in the HELLKONTROLL sound. More than anything else, this is a record that begs to be played loud, which is a noble and punk as fuck thing indeed. Earlier I compared them to GLOOM, and that's not so much because of the way they write songs (their material is not all that similar musically) as the same startling feeling of anarchy and immediacy, like if you saw this band they'd throw something at you and smash all their instruments and this might be the last time they ever play and gig and who cares because this is *right now*! Check it out if you like punk that makes you feel something. (AU)
(Vinyl Rites)

HELLSHOCK – "Ghosts of the Past" LP

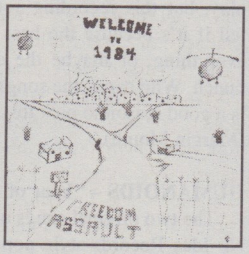
Not to take anything away from what HELLSHOCK have accomplished in the intervening years, but their demo is still one of my all time favorite demo recordings. So now here it is, finally pressed to vinyl in all of its BOLT THROWER/stench-core worshipping glory, and I'm glad to see it. The riffs are massive, the breakdowns are epic, every element is just fucking right. Most of these songs will be familiar to fans from their first album, but these rawer recordings only enhance the urgency and do have some significant differences from the album tracks. This is one of the best demos of the '00s finally getting a richly deserved vinyl release and that's really all there is to know. (AU)
(Black Water)

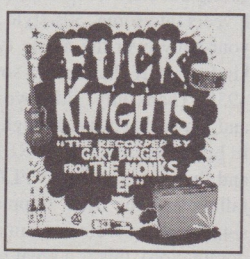
HELLSHOCK—"They Wait for You Still" LP

Dark as fuck. This crushes. Up there with AMEBIX and SACRILEGE in terms of atmosphere, energy and songwriting, HELLSHOCK is undeniably one of the best crust bands *ever*. This is probably my favorite record of the year. HELLSHOCK never fails to deliver. Their last LP was really good but this surpasses it. Having seen them play some of these songs live, I couldn't wait for the record. Mid-paced tracks like "To Whom They Scream" and "Stray" are undeniable death-thrashing crust classics. One thing about HELLSHOCK that distinguishes them from others of the genre is their understanding and ability to play in the style of SACRILEGE. They write the riffs we wanted more of upon listening to *Within the Prophecy* and especially *Behind the Realms of Madness*. SACRILEGE are pioneers of the finest dark crust, and HELLSHOCK carries on in that tradition while creating an original sound with the brutal and deathly vocals of Grizzle and the fluid, punishing drum style of Keet. In the realms of metallic crust and dark music in general, HELLSHOCK stand out from the pack. Fucking sick. (DB)
(Black Water)

HERÄTYS – "Helvettiin Ja Takaisin" EP

HERÄTYS (the name translates to "awakening" or "wake up" in English) follows fast on their debut LP with a more recent (i.e. from this year) recording of their classic Finnish-meets-Swedish hardcore attack. This EP lands somewhere between the stripped-down, "focus on the songs" 2008 A-side of the 12" and the heftier, blown-out, 2009 12" B-side. Combine that cleaner recording with vocals that are sung/shouted distinctively in Finnish, and the end result is considerably more towards the classic KAAOS/RIISTEYT '80s Finn hardcore sound, but still fueled by the TOTALITÄR-influenced overdrive and fourth-hand Svensk DISCHARGE-riff overkill. Great EP, lyrics





entirely in Finnish with no translation. (KS)
(La Familia)

HOMEOWNERS – "Light and Vision" EP

HOMEOWNERS are a local band made up of folks from way too many different bands to even begin to mention. They play upbeat poppy rock with jangly guitars and rad riffage that doesn't ruin the songs like it does with so many other bands. It's always a good show when they play. With that said, I feel like this recording is missing something. They always have a nice, full and even sound when they play, but this recording sounds a bit thin. I can't tell if it's because the bass sounds muffled behind everything, or maybe the drums need some more punch. Who cares, the songs are great and that alone is a good reason to pick this one up. (BD)
(Margin Mouth)

HUMANOIDS – "Year of the Snake" EP

The two original songs on this EP are rather lofty No Idea Records style pop-punk. I wonder if Kiss of Death is currently courting these guys? This stuff definitely falls under the man-core category. Music that is unmistakably written and preformed by "dudes." The first song is total REPLACEMENTS-worship while the second song seems like a love letter to DILLINGER FOUR. Listening to this I can totally imagine a brand new Twins baseball cap on the singer's head...although they're from St. Louis so maybe not. Then they wrap things up with a cover of "Youth of America" by the WIPERS. They play it really well, but it's identical to the original. It's kind of silly to have a verbatim cover like that on an EP. Save that shit for your live shows or the B-side on an Art of the Underground single. But in all seriousness, the originals are good, just not much different from the parade of bands that preceded them playing the same damn thing. (FS)
(Rock Bottom)

THE HUMMS – "Lemonland" LP

After a string of EPs and a few appearances on compilations, this is the HUMMS' first proper LP. The HUMMS, from somewhere in the great Southern state of Georgia, are a hook-filled garage rock band that sometimes remind me of a more technically proficient FLAT DUO JETS. Side one starts off strong but starts to lose steam towards the end when it veers into some '50s-style schlocky-talking-about-your-baby-over-the-music type of garbage. It's the kind of stuff that hasn't sounded interesting since 1955. Thankfully, side two starts off strong again and stays that way through the rest of the record. It brings to mind JAY REATARD, the CRAMPS and the aforementioned FLAT DUO JETS. Besides falling into the usual trappings of garage rock (i.e. singing about women from a position of power and domination), this is a great record. (GH)
(Bachelor)

HYGIENE – "Recruitment" EP

I've seen more than a few records by this diligently releasing band from London. Three good tracks of gain-y shambling post-punk, which likely cringes at "garage" bandwagons and instead holds tight to their countrymen's fine lineage, SWELL MAPS included. A little loose around the edges to convince us they've spent hours at the four-track pulling this one off, but its chaos is always within the borders of tapping your toe and bobbing your head—a great balance between energy and focus also convincingly walked by the likes of TYVEK. I always dug their Sharpie pen logo too... Totally ready to get started on their back catalog now! (JS)
(Going Underground)

IDLE TIMES – LP

Writing a straight-up simple pop tune is possibly one of the hardest things to nail. When a band fills an entire album full of pop gems I can't help but feel that I've got the smallest dick in the room (a title that actually belongs to our esteemed columnist Logan D. Worrell). Anyways, once I get over the penis envy effect I fall in complete worship of the pop protagonists. IDLE TIMES have my worship gift wrapped and sent. A psych whirl of guitars wrapped around some VELVETS downer pop with subtle hints of the CLEAN at their darkest, CHEAP TIME gone all dirty and C86 with an infatuation for the BYRDS instead of the KINKS. I need this record and I need it now. Brilliant. (SD)
(HoZac)

INSERVIBLES – "Cua es tu Pedo Nero?" EP

Weirdo über-lo-fi tweaker punk from Mexico. Sounds like it was recorded through my kids' Fisher Price tape deck. Like the bastard child of RATOS DEL VATICANO if they were influenced by DESTRUCTION UNIT, CONFUSE and DISORDER. It's hardcore, but it's garage. Urgent, messy, thin and punk as fuck. The true sound of desperate kids. Boss sounds. (TB)
(Leather Bar)

ISKRA – "Bureval" LP

ISKRA's progression from their first full-length is difficult to overstate. In the beginning a crusty black metal band with questionable vocals, they have changed a good bit. Gone are almost all traces of crust—the band now mixes in a good bit of grindcore and punk with their black metal sound. The vocals have improved a ton and now are not in the love-'em-or-hate-'em category. The consistent parts of the band are the lyrics/politics/attitude, which are still deep, non-cliché and anarchist. While I won't go so far as to say they sound like some classic Norwegian black metal bands, they aren't that far away either. A second wave of black metal sound that could be in the same universe as MARDUK, for example. On a few tracks, like "Within the Black" I'd even say they have entered green/eco black metal territory. A tremendous release. The only minus is that it can get a bit tired listening to tremlo picking, song after song. (MH)
(Agipunk)

THE JACKNIVES – "Backhanded Sting" CD

If the DETROIT COBRAS concentrated on originals that had a bit more mainstream bluesish rock, it would be in pretty much the same ballpark as the JACKNIVES. For the record, the third most memorable song ("Hide the Glue") cops the hook from the SONICS' "Like No Other Man," which shows some good taste. The most memorable pair, "The Melody of Things Going Wrong" and "What We Deserve," sounds like a somewhat less spooky MR. AIRPLANE MAN. Next time, let's get real gone, man. (DD)
(self-released)

J.C. SATÀN – "Sick of Love" CD

I guess I never will understand people in the rock music world (underground or mainstream) who have these strange obsessions with religious imagery. The band name J. C. SATÀN isn't that clever and the use of pentagrams and crucifixes with topless women is just boring. I know it is meant to offend and provoke, but does that really happen anymore? Even if it offends that one religious nut, don't the rest of us just scoff at him anyway? Which is all really unfortunate because the music on the CD is really enjoyable. It is upbeat, jangley garage-ish rock falling into the TY SEGALL/OH SEES camp though with less distortion and reverb. It is full of nice melodies and pleasant harmonies and seemingly few lyrics about god and/or satan. (CK)
(Slovenly)

JONESIN' – "The Dream Is Dead" EP

You know, I just wish I could say something more about this than what I'm going to: JONESIN' are totally synonymous with that No Idea/Fest, Awesomefest, Florida to San Diego sound. I mean, I'll hear it in the background while I'm shitfaced in one of said locations, not wearing a shirt, hair wet through with sweat, stupid stuff written all over me in a Sharpie while supping on my fifteenth warm PBR of the day and hugging one of my beer-bellied and bearded friends, but, am I gonna buy the 7" and bring it home on the painful, hungover plane ride home? Probably not, no. (GG)
(No Breaks)

KAPUT KRAUTS / MAD MINORITY – split EP

Heavily accented German hardcore. MAD MINORITY has that epic ENDSTAND sound—hoarse vocals, downtuned guitars. Good shit. KAPUT KRAUTS have a more post-punk sound, but still bring the 'core...again, in the same world as early REFUSED/ENDSTAND. Decent split. (TB)
(Twisted Chords)

KERIPUKKI / YDINASEETON POHJOLA – split EP

Split 7" from these two sets of Finnish punks. YDINASEETON POHJOLA is up first, and I think they're the better of the two. While there is a bit of an eighties Scandinavian sound here (in fact, a few riffs bring to mind classic RATTUS), the overall tone is distinguished by the pace, which is a bit slower than the typical fare, and the guitar tone, which is fully cranked to the "ultra distort" setting à la GAI/SWANKYS or CONFUSE. I saw the cover of their LP, which is a direct rip-off of the IMPACT side of the IMPACT/EU'S ARSE split EP, and I guess I hear some of that or other critical Italian stuff here as well. KERIPUKKI aren't as memorable, though they are less distorted and a little faster and they bear more resemblance to their Finnish hardcore predecessors. Long story short, check this out if you like early-'80s European hardcore like any of the aforementioned bands. It's not quite as compelling, but it rages hard and you could certainly do a lot worse. (JH)
(Nightstick Justice)

KESUMAT / THRASH OHOOII – split EP

Two Malaysian thrash hardcore bands rip it up with five tracks each. KESUMAT plays quick thrash hardcore with a skate thrash leaning that makes me hop around the room. Their sound is a bit like

CONQUEST FOR DEATH with borderline anthems. THRASH OHOOII also does the thrash hardcore thing but has more of that wonderful short, fast and loud thrash sound. Go! I love the cover art with the drawing of a skateboard with INFEST on the bottom of the deck. I hadn't heard of either band and am surprised how much I liked them. This rips. (MH)
(Pissart)

THE KIDNAPPERS – "Will Protect You" LP

Some fairly stand-up, decent Eurock'n'roll—yeah, I just coined a new term. Read it and weep, or cringe… I can feel these Krauts pitching an undeniable Stiff Records tent in my ear, which I'm not opposed to at all. Though, I could do without their odd juxtaposition of clichéd "ooh, baby" new girlfriend chintz and frequent bursts of misogyny. Oh, and that riff in "Tomorrow You'll Be Better" has been directly lifted from the 2009 evil top 40 resident, "Evacuate the Dance Floor" by CASCADA. They may claim ignorance to that, but as they're European, I wouldn't believe it. (GG)
(Alien Snatch)

KITTY LITTLE / SCIENTIFIC MAPS – split EP

Two bands that veer more toward indie rock and/or power-pop, and each offering up two songs. KITTY LITTLE, a three-piece from upstate New York, follows in the footsteps of SUPERCHUNK. Upbeat tempos, gritty guitar and slightly high-pitch vocals. SCIENTIFIC MAPS, also from upstate NY, are a bit more lo-fi and mellow. Maybe it's just the horns, but it at times reminds me of NEUTRAL MILK HOTEL with a touch of '60s British pop. I hear a little BELLE AND SEBASTIAN in the melody on the second song. A fine sample of these two bands. (MD)
(Peterwalkee)

KNUCKLEHEAD – "Hearts on Fire" CD

Damn! KNUCKLEHEAD must be the undisputed kings of Canadian punk rock at this point!! With the recent disbanding of WEDNESDAY NIGHT HEROES and SNFU barely limping along, KNUCKLEHEAD is now in their sixteenth year of punk-rockin' and rollin' with no apparent end in sight. By my count, this is their fifth full-length over the years, along with numerous EPs and compilation appearances and the first long-player since 2005's *New Black List*. In the grand scheme of the last sixteen years, there has been an evolution due to some line-up changes and obviously some improved musicianship along the way, but the thing that you gotta love about KNUCKLEHEAD is that they still sound like KNUCKLEHEAD!! This is largely thanks to the sharp lyrics and raspy voice of Kyle on lead vocals that remains distinct even with the numerous comparisons of KNUCKLEHEAD to contemporaries like SWINGIN' UTTERS and BOUNCING SOULS. In addition to the usual subject matter of social commentary, there are some lighter songs on this album like "First Kick" about the folly of buying a new motorcycle and angering the wife for doing so… I guess even us punks have to grow up someday, but the rebellious nature never goes away!! (ML)
(Stumble)

KONTATTO – "Mai Come Voi" LP

This new crusty D-beat-fueled release comes from one of Italy's most well known current punk bands. It's fast as fuck, with pummeling drums that are so solid and destructive sounding that I imagine the walls coming down around KONTATTO as they play. The guitars are menacing and have just enough wank in them to add flavor without saturating the music with too much metal, but enough squealing to keep my ears at attention. There is melody at times, but mostly brutality. The vocals are throaty and pissed with lyrics in Italian (English translations/explanations in on the sleeve). This band is political and they know their shit. They are very concerned with clarity and passing on the knowledge they have without being preachy or pretentious. They have some good stuff to tell you and you should listen. I love it. This is a no-frills record with sounds I love from bands like WOLFPAK and WRETCHED, and while they aren't reinventing the wheel here, this is the best stuff of this kind around. The last track on this record is gold. (MB)
(Agipunk)

KURWA APARATA – "Armed Chemicals of Untame Thoughts" LP

This is a solid crust record out of Vienna, Austria, in the vein of RATTUS and DISCHARGE without as much of a D-beat influence. The name is Polish for "camera whore" (I looked it up) which is probably an inside joke of some kind, and while the band isn't exactly reinventing the butt-flap I like the mid-tempo surliness and the minimum of instrumental grandstanding. The songs are yelled in intelligible English that, as you may have noticed from the record's title, can sometimes get a little funny when the language barrier gets in the way. Take the first few lines of the song "Ass Cleaning Keyboard" from the lyric sheet: "Clean your ass with keyboard / Should I fit in European standards / Where people grow up as racing rats / MySpace shows you how much you're popular." I get what the dude is saying but it did make me smile. (BL)
(Scumusick)

LÄRM – LP

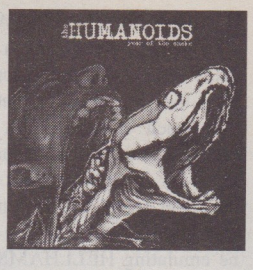
Most should know who LÄRM is: the fast-as-fuck Dutch hardcore punkers that began, oh, about 30 years ago. Stickers and other paraphernalia have been seen all over the place for years now. Well, they have a new LP that is totally nuts! I was not sure what to expect. There was no doubt about the ability of these vets in pulling something like this off musically because we all know SEEIN RED has been at it for years now and the dudes know how to play. This LP holds up; the playing is tight and powerful. The vocalist has a great delivery and is what pushes this away from sounding too much like SEEIN RED. Continuing in the tradition of their furious sounding tunes, this record is a job well done. Those who are looking for a rapid-fire sound with firm leftists politics and conviction may want to pick this LÄRM release up. (MS)
(Way Back When)

LIBERTY – "Just Talking Reality" CD

When I first got this CD, with its photoshopped cover art that was ironically more street-punk than anarcho-punk, it didn't occur to me that this might be the LIBERTY of yore, but it is—the same band that released the classic *The People Who Care Are Angry*. Twenty-some years later it'd be naïve to expect a seamless return to form, a return transcending their earlier output in terms of quality, but this album is certainly OK. The songs carry on in a similar formula, as do the lyrics and the vocals. Most definitely this is old-school anarcho-punk, at least in principle. And better than the most recent OI POLLOI recordings by far! The strange thing about anarcho bands recording new material is how the production changes. Something that gives the earlier recordings in this genre their special quality is the production values: the guitar tones are particular to the era, the bass tones especially are, and the drums are punchy and lo-fi. None of these characteristics are reproduced here, which in itself isn't bad. It just changes the vibe of the recording to sounding more modern and much brighter. The more experimental post-punk elements of their earlier album don't play much of a role. These are more straightforward punk tunes with rock'n'roll solos and a distinctively anarcho punk vibe. Some catchy songs but nothing too exciting. (DB)
(Active)

LIKE RATS – "Genes" EP

This is a pretty cool EP of blackened hardcore. LIKE RATS



basically uses a HELLHAMMER-ish guitar tone with HELLHAMMER-ish riffs and a blackened, raspy scream. I like the scream and I realize that's what they're going for, but I think it would sound that much sicker with a deeper style. Just my personal taste. It's one of the things that makes death metal far superior to black metal—the guts. At first the songs seemed fairly long with a lot of parts and cool arrangements but then I just realized they might be emulating HELLHAMMER by feeding back in between songs. This style is becoming less novel with bands like DISHAMMER, CHOKE.THIRST.DIE and the underrated BATTLETORN (who's been playing in this style for years now), but *Genes* is still a cool record with pretty of good riffs and a cool vibe. If you're fan of the aforementioned bands this is for you. (DB)
(Cosmic Debris)

LOOKING FOR AN ANSWER – "Split the Suffering, Split the Pain" CD

A collection of split EPs and comp tracks from Spain's finest grinders. Grind by punks is different from grind by regular hessian dirtbags—not sure exactly how, but it's better. LOOKING FOR AN ANSWER are punks, and they grind like fuck. Dual-vocal attack, and of course the low, gutteral dude mostly takes the lead, crushing guitars (most LOOKING FOR AN ANSWER recordings are ridiculously pro) and a pace that rarely lets up over these 34 tracks. Songs from a few tribute comps include NAPALM DEATH, DENAK and TERRORIZER covers. If you like grind then you should already have this. (WN)
(Deep Six)

LORD GREEN – "Flying/Higher Than God"

A two-song 45 from this Illinois three-piece. The tracks could have come from two different bands. "Flying" is instrumental stoner rock in the KYUSS vein and really rocks. Everything, from the prominent bass sound to the guitar riffs, is perfect for the style. "Higher Than God" is more a punk/hardcore sound mixed with heavy rock with a stoner attitude. There is a nice psychedelic breakdown where they border on EYEHATEGOD doom sounds but the whole first half of the track is somewhat anonymous. OK stuff. (MH)
(Give Praise)

LOUIS LINGG AND THE BOMBS – "Anarchist Til Death" EP

How curious. What the hell made Mariam and Layla think of me for reviewing when they heard this? Was it how childish, silly and nervous this, erm, *music* sounds? The confusing and utterly jarring grunge-into-techno breakdowns? The poorly sang French and Japanese vocals? The sample of a horse neighing? My brain already feels like it's going to explode, covering every exposed inch of white wall here at *MRR* HQ with still twitching grey matter, before I even see this monstrosity is eight tracks long. The last track on side A is an irritating mix of intros to well known songs that all end right before you want to start singing along with them. The last track on side B is a nursery rhyme sang in French. Make. This. *Stop*. Straight away. Oh, and there is a reviewer copy! Great. (GG)
(Close Up)

THE LUCKY ONES – "The Booze Sessions" CD

Canadian quartet reassembles to lay down ten tunes about, well...drinking. And that's pretty much it. Of the ditties assembled, seven of 'em explicitly refer to drinking/being drunk/beer/raising a glass et al. in the title. Just in case you were looking for a theme or thread running through it all. Fortunately, the music is pretty damn rockin'. Other than some gratingly out of tune vocals on the first track, 'tis a strong release, and those that dig driving punk rock/Oi with lots of meaty choruses and woah-ohs for good measure, will, er, hoist a pint for this one. Plus, these guys claim that they'll be a-keepin' punk alive and true forever. Or at least while their livers hold out, I s'pose... (RK)
(Stumble)

MAAKUNTARADIO – "Ehka Huomenna Kaikki On Toisin" CD

Finnish punk sung in native tongue. Maybe a Finnish COCK SPARRER? Not quite, but these guys do go from sing-along punk to more up-tempo stuff. Maybe a little UK SUBS too. Finnish pub-rock, I suppose. (RL)
(Airiston Punk-Levyt)

MAGNUMS – "Young Romans" EP

Super snotty vocals with basic, sing-songy goofy attitude from Atlanta-based MAGNUMS. Humorous and somewhat lighthearted but smart subjects à la the DEAD MILKMEN fit the KBD style perfectly. Three fun, quick and a bit off-the-beaten-path tracks on this short and to-the-point single. (AL)
(NMG)

MAMMOTH GRINDER – "Extinction of Humanity" LP

These Texan gents played a pretty devastating mix of hardcore and sludge on their earlier releases, but they totally switched tracks with this seven-song, 45 RPM 12". On a side note, I'm actually kind of wondering why I'm reviewing it now, seeing as it came out *last* December and they've released a 7" and a tour tape since, and since it also appears to be sold out from the label... but I digress. Back on topic: that earlier sound is gone. MAMMOTH GRINDER now plays straightforward, early-'90s-style death metal, heavily influenced by NIHILIST/ENTOMBED, GRAVE and the whole early Swedish sound. This isn't the clean, produced Swe-death of AT THE GATES, though, or the modern, triggered, guttural slam shit that currently passes as "death metal" in most circles—this is heavy, blasting and raw, with the same punk backbone (especially in the drumming) that was on display in the Swedes, BOLT THROWER, DEATH, REPULSION, etc. This is also a very, very good record. Along with BASTARD PRIEST, MIASMAL and SLAUGHTER STRIKE, this is some of the best punk-linked death metal around today. Fukking killer shit. Buy or die. (VX)
(Cyclopean)

MANNEQUIN MEN – "Hobby Girl/See Saw"

This band probably would have gotten a write-up in *Backdoor Man*. Or a record released on Chiswick. Now they play one of those awesome Toyota/Scion-sponsored "garage" fests. If you are on the hunt for REPLACEMENTS without teeth, this would do the trick. What was the slogan? If it ain't Stiff, it ain't worth a... (LG)
(HoZac)

MARTYRDÖD – "Sekt" LP

With their third LP, Sweden's MARTYRDÖD takes their brutal combination of black metal and D-beat hardcore and pushes it deeper into bleak, crushing moods and riffs, as harsh vocals scrape across the landscape of thick, head-banging riffs so saturated in overload that it's a dense mass of rumbling, destructive heaviness punctuated by searing guitar leads... It's an interesting progression from their previous LPs and surprisingly uncharted territory for the "noise not music" school, where the sound could be described as standing in front of the speaker mains at their live show in a hair-raising, sonic bath of pure, heart-palpitating heaviness. The key to MARTYRDÖD is the balance between the severity of the metal influences and the dependability of D-beat hardcore—the low-end dredge will give way to blasting, the blasting will give way to punishing crush, but the creativity of the band extends far beyond that with keyboard parts and inventive bridges, wrapped in killer artwork with interesting lyrics (translated here from Swedish) that meld imagery with meaning. Awesome!!!! (KS)
(La Famila)

MARVELLOUS DARLINGS – "I Hate Rock 'n' Roll/Terminally Ill"

If you look at life through a *Powerpearls*-refracted lens, this band is probably already on your radar. Featuring someone who also does time in FUCKED UP, this band has provided a perfect emulation of the power-pop genre—the whiny, lovelorn vocals, the sheeny, overwrought guitars. Unfortunately for the MARVELLOUS DARLINGS, for this listener most power-pop sounds like some creepy guy complaining about unobtainable girls, girls that I wish would pay attention to the whiny power-pop population so said population would stop writing songs about the tragedy of it all. I have no idea what these particular songs are about, since despite repeated listens I could not make out lyrics, but either way. (LG)
(Speedwax)

GLEN MATLOCK AND THE PHILISTINES – "Born Running" CD

What if a former member of a seminal (but not especially good, when divorced from their historical context—for an explanation of this phenomenon see Stewart Home's *Cranked Up Really High* if for some reason you haven't yet—but I digress) punk band put together a group and released an album 30+ years later in which mature musical and songwriting skills are wedded to a singular and uncompromising sonic vision without regard for what might be happening in the mainstream musical scene. Wouldn't it be *awesome*? Sorry to say that's not what's happening on this snooze of a CD. But at least this review provides the opportunity for a great out-of-context pull-quote to be used in ads (you're welcome). (DD)
(Stomp)

MEERCAZ – "Space Hate" 12"

MEERCAZ manages to sound *exactly* like an outtake from some stoned-ass, cut-rate hard rock act from 1973. I looked up information about them just to make sure this wasn't a reissue of some lost cutting-room-floor recordings of HAWKWIND's little brothers or some shit like that. I guess this is supposed to be psychedelic. You know, lots of wah

pedals and what sounds like deteriorating analog tape. It's only four songs and I am bored out of my mind. The cover art is just beautiful, though. (GH)
(Tic Tac Totally)

MEERCAZ – "Never Too Late to Learn/Brainscanning"

Wow, these guys really did their homework. Yes, it is 2010, and yet this sounds exactly like 1975. People buy vintage gear and all the accoutrements every day of the week, but it's really hard to actually *sound* like the '70s. Especially on record. These guys have succeeded there. Unfortunately it sounds like kinda mediocre '70s. It's all the right pieces, post-VELVETS chug with sick distorto guitar leads and lo-fi analog synth, but neither of the songs really grabs me. If this had come out in 1975 I could probably settle, but 35 years later I want a song with hooks or drone. Something! Anyway, it's cool, I just want more. They must have at least one killer song anyway, I just haven't heard it yet. (GB)
(Sweet Rot)

MESS FOLK – "This Is Mess Folk…And More" LP

This LP is a compilation of MESS FOLK songs recorded between 2008 and 2010 that includes their twelve-song cassette (from which the three songs on their HoZac 7" came) plus ten more songs. 22 songs in all. That's quite a lot of MESS FOLK. I like them when they are trying to be FLIPPER more than when they are imitating JAY REATARD. Fortunately they have more of a tendency to go FLIPER-style. Droney, messy, grungy, slightly introspective. "Life Is a Joke" is the best track. It's a catchy, slightly hardcore song, but played much slower. The guard seems to have been let down on that one and as a result it comes across as more natural than the others. (CK)
(Bachelor)

MICKEY – "Highway Bound/Wild Kind"

If it didn't say that it was recorded in 2010, I would totally think this was another one of those lost treasures from the late '70s that has been discovered and pressed 30+ years after the fact. That's how good this is!! Not only are the songs written with a heavy dose of '70s rock'n'roll swagger, but the production quality sounds authentic—this doesn't have that overwhelming "slick" sound to it, yet it doesn't sound thin and lo-fi like so many other bands trying to sound retro. "Highway Bound" on the A-side is the rocker that has a bit of a NEW YORK DOLLS feel to it with the guitar and piano bits, and on the B-side, "Wild Kind" has a little bit more of a groovy sound reminiscent of JAY REATARD's many incarnations. This is a great single with gems on both sides! (ML)
(Florida's Dying)

THE MINC – "Where Is Your God" CD

First off, I have to give respect to any punk band from Russia, where the nationalist thugs and neo-nazis make being visibly punk or leftist at all a literally life-threatening proposition. Furthermore I have to give respect to the MINC for being a really fucking kick-ass D-beat punk band! This shit sounds like classic '90s Swedish D-beat à la *Absolut Country of Sweden*-era ANTI-CIMEX, early DRILLER KILLER or SLAKTMASK. It's got that deep snare sound, the cigarettes-and-whisky vocals, the short and awesome lead and most importantly the feeling of immediacy and desperation that made me love this style way back in the day. Of everything I've got for review this month, this might be my favorite because it came completely out of left field and blew me completely away. Lyrics are in Russian with English explanations that make more sense than most English-speaking band's lyrics. This is really exceptionally good, and it really deserves your support. Write the label, get a copy and enjoy. (AU)
(Totalpunk)

MULTICULT – LP

Intriguing release in that it comes packaged in a blank, generic disco sleeve along with a sticker of the band's logo and barely any info beyond the song titles. There was little to be gleaned from the internet besides the fact that MULTICULT is a three-piece from Baltimore. I like bands that aren't too concerned with their internet presence, but unfortunately I wasn't grabbed by the group's style, which I'd describe as noodly, angular, discordant post-rock with distant roots in post-punk. The vocals are halfway buried in the mix, and coupled with the nonchalant delivery, take a distant second to the relatively complex, mid-tempo music. The best track is "Whiteout," where the band gets a nice, repetitive dirge going, but otherwise it's all too *rock*-sounding and devoid of emotion to make an impact one way or the other. Glad these folks are doing their thing, but it's just not for me. (CS)
(Private Press)

THE NARCS – "Revenge of the Gremmies" EP

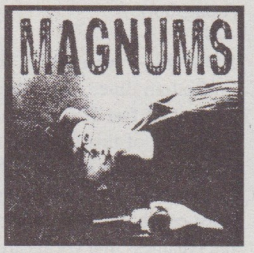
The gremmies are out of control and here to take over your shitty party. Snotty, fuzzed-out party punk that hops around between catchy '90s garage, surf punk, primitive hardcore and a couple of other subgenres, but keeps it fun and interesting for the whole ride. The final song descends into the singer and the three friends they invited along for the recoding session, all presumably wasted at this point, yelling "I'm dangerous, I'm fucking dan-ger-oous" over and over again, and sounding like they're having a blast. I heard a story about this band sneaking a bunch of underage kids into a bar for their set, and if this is any indication as to what their live show is like, I'd better see them in 2011. (DG)
(Reel Time)

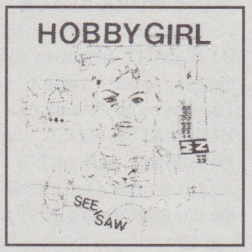
NERVESKADE – LP

It is no secret that this is one of my favorite bands right now, so what the fuck can I say about them that hasn't been said before? Plenty. Fast, raw, relentless, no bullshit and noisy as all hell, but while others are still trying to master the fuzzed-out UK82 sound, NERVERSADE keeps the noise at just the right level so you are still listening to killer punk songs, not just a nonsensical mess; each song is its own. Don't get me wrong, this LP is still an assault on the senses, with pummeling precision (but not entirely under control) drumming, driving bass that sounds like it's too fucking hot to hold one note too long lest your fingers be scorched, and screechy guitar that created an image of this kid cheese-grating his fucking hand out of existence across the strings. The vocals are throaty, screamy and abrupt/barky, sometimes chorus, with lots of anguished, angry "ahhhhh!" Yeah, it's sort of painful and alluring at the same time…like I said before, barely controlled chaos. The LP hurls you into an uncomfortable place filled with rage and tension that makes you wanna enjoy breaking out of. I love it. The artwork is cartoony with lots of puking involved. There is an insert on some nice cardstock that folds out into a lyric sheet with more funny cartoon shit, more puke and more punks. The other side is a poster. Nice job, dudes—this rules. (MB)
(Black Water)

NO ACTION – "Mixed Messages" EP

A four-piece from Australia offering up three songs on this slab of black wax. This first thing that comes to mind is CAP'N JAZZ, especially the guitar playing. The vocals kinda make me think of JONATHAN RICHMAN and are perhaps a bit too dry. They could use a little more—dare I say?—emotion. I keep waiting for the singer to let loose, but he never really does. The song on side B is quite nice with its extended intro and the use of a xylophone (or something similar) and little guitar runs during the breaks. (MD)
(self-released)





NOISE – "Blame" EP

If you're gonna be a big, scary skinhead then make some big, scary music. Fortunately for these friendly looking guys their riffs and hooks are as heavy as their bench press. The guitars bulldoze whilst a heavy vocal melody gives the tunes a memorable punch. Gruff but not forced singing, backed up by Chicago-inspired woah-woah-woahs lending the sound a slight ol' school '80s feel. LEATHERFACE meets HARDSKIN meets NAKED RAYGUN meets BLITZ. And there's me thinking only France and Australia could produce good skin music. You go, US of A. (SD)
(Longshot)

NOMOS – "Notes from the Acheron" 12"

Bottom line, this thing rules. There's a good amount of fast HC that's all well and good but the highlights of this one-sided 12" for me are the mid-paced parts that make up about half the record. Some serious stomp-inducing moments all over this are a great psych-up without being at all mosh-y. To add to the greatness, the vocals are burly and great. (JU)
(Deranged)

NONE MORE BLACK – "Icons" CD

Third full-length in ten years from the ex-KID DYNAMITE frontman and cohorts. Kind of like the thinking man's version of emo/melodic hardcore. The drive and melody of a LAWRENCE ARMS and HOT WATER MUSIC, with lots of math rock bits, breakdowns and rock'n'roll all blended together. And it works. Quite well indeed. Of course, I like the straightforward gruff pop songs the best, but you can't go really wrong with this one. No idea what the songs are about, but they sure sound appealing. (RK)
(Fat Wreck)

NO SLOGAN – "Daggers" EP

On their first release as a five-piece, Chicago's NO SLOGAN adds the tiniest bit of complexity to their songs. They still play rough, barely catchy hardcore, kinda reminding me of LIBYANS in tempo and sound—not vocals though, as NO SLOGAN utilizes a plain sort of yelling. The single track on the B-side hits harder and more direct than the two A-side numbers, where they include a short, calm interlude for you to catch your breath or enjoy your beverage. On this release the lyrics are all personal in nature, and not real uplifting, lending a darker overall vibe to the record. This EP is pretty good, but I'm not losing my shit. (JM)
(Thoughtcrime)

NO STATIK – "Clarified, Distilled, Recomposed/ We Will All Die in the End"

Time spent at the coalface brings experience and clarity. NO STATIK is ex-members of all kinds of bands you love. Collectively they sound nothing like past endeavors, yet it's impossible to ignore their collective history. The sound is sharp, to-the-point, thought-out and measured. All the good things about hardcore filtered and distilled onto a 7" disc. Thick, galloping HC taking cues from the Japanese brethren but with harsh, desperate female vocals…not unlike the singer from HIATUS, who had one of my favorite voices. Of course this label has become a stamp of quality, one of those things you'll buy unheard knowing it'll be good. No exception. Limited, so get on it sharpish. Keep turning it over. Godlike. (TB)
(Iron Lung)

OOGA BOOGAS – "Sentimental Stranger/ Eisbaer"

A complete different take on the wonderful world of pop this time round. Side A sounding like a lost treasure from the vaults of Flying Nun Records, more in tune with the CHILLS or the VERALINES than the chaotic surf garage of the last record. Back to business as usual on side B, a TUBEWAY ARMY feel mixed in with some dirty DIGITAL LEATHER anti-dancefloor electro vibe. Sounds like two completely different bands, but nothing wrong with a bit of vinyl schizophrenia. (SD)
(Aarght!)

PARASITIC SKIES – "The Descent" CD

Vegan straight edge warriors playing over-the-top metalcore along the lines of ALL OUT WAR or BOLT THROWER. All the hallmarks you've come to expect from this genre: gruff vocals, dark and ominous lyrics, heavy downtuning, palm-muted riffs, and of course lots of brutal breakdowns. Absolutely nothing is original here, but hey, if you just wanna mosh, that's not really what you're looking for anyways. (JH)
(Seventh Dagger)

PHANTOM LIMBS – CD

Wait, didn't the PHANTOM LIMBS break up??? This doesn't sound like weird circus music… Oh, I see—different band!!! OK, this is pretty limp, sounds like shit that came out on that Deep Elm label. Y'know—introspective indie rock? Like APPLESEED CAST. I guess this was recorded by one dude, which is cool I guess. Further into the disc it has a total DC vibe, like SHUDDER TO THINK or a wimpier EMBRACE (if you can imagine that!!). (TB)
(Clown School, no info)

THE PHEROMOANS – "Midnight Watchdog" EP

The PHEROMOANS fire off a terse, reverb-laden missive from a cupboard underneath someone's stairs. Hurdy-gurdy, experimental DIY pop with bits and pieces of TELEVISION PERSONALITIES, SWELL MAPS and SCRITTI POLITTI, not to mention the hoards of unknown bedroom bands that pop up on *Messthetics* comps. OK, it's very authentic to a long-gone time and place, but who says those bands left no alleyways unexplored? PHEROMOANS have traveled back in time to see if any of them left any clues behind for the kids of today that don't have one. (AM)
(Sweet Rot)

POPULAR MECHANICS – "Time and a Half" CD

This CD is good, but you probably wouldn't like it. Probably. Here's why: this band falls under the musical category I refer to as "co-worker rock." It's the type of indie rock that you never seek out, but there is probably a guy at your work who plays in a band like this. Sounds a lot like *Colour and the Shape*-era FOO FIGHTERS and nearly all the songs are about a failed relationship. And all the songs are pretty safe; they're not drifting too far from what their favorite bands have done before. It's by-the-numbers indie rock. So why is this CD theoretically good? Well, they can write a good song. They are musically proficient and can structure their songs in interesting ways. And although most of the songs are about heartache, the lyrics are thoughtful and real. John Q. Singer over here took the time to compose his thoughts and expresses them in a way that's interesting. A rare feat in the "I wrote this album about my ex" category. And some of the guitar riffs are pretty cool. There is enough good things going on that I would recommend this to someone who told me FOO FIGHTERS was their favorite band. (FS)
(Pancake Productions)

QUINTRON – "Ring the Alarm/Jamskate"

QUINTRON and MISS PUSSYCAT have been disrupting the musical landscape for as long as I remember, being that they were somehow part of the early-'90s Chicago no wave explosion that I was most consumed by as a teenager. Now they live at the Spellcaster Lounge in New Orleans and continue to reinvigorate the soundscape with patented inventions (the Drum Buddy, an instrument that is somewhere between a drum machine and a Theremin) and other disembodied synthesizers and organs. The music contained on this 45 has a demented boardwalk organ player feel, combined with a bubblegum punk attack. Perfect for rollerskating whilst on LSD… Wild yet contained. (LG)
(Bachelor)

THE RANTOULS – "In the Village of Rantoul" LP

So many bands from the '60s made such awesome pop that apparently everyone these days feels the need to do it over again. The RANTOULS are certainly one of them. '60s pop is the best way to describe this. Its almost as if they sat down and wrote new words to a slew of tried-and-true chord progressions featured in any number of hits from way back when. Fans of NODZZZ will eat this shit right up. (BD)
(Chocolate Covered)

RAW POWER – "Resuscitate" LP

I rarely trust albums by bands whose expiration date has long since passed, so when cynically tossed this album on the turntable for the first time, I waited for an immediate confirmation. I mean, there's no way this could be any good, especially since the original guitarist Giuseppe is no longer on this mortal coil, right? Wrong! The wailing cacophony of guitars and manic drum blasts that defined Italian hardcore are all right here. And RAW POWER was the flag-bearer of that national scene (er…and NEGAZIONE, of course), practically putting Italy on the map (as far as the virtually xenophobic American hardcore scene at least) with *Screams From the Gutter*. OK, I might be going a bit too far, 'cause nothing will ever compare to those albums of the mid-'80s, but this is still pretty damn impressive. Mauro's vocals, while sounding slightly gruffer and noticeably less manic, are still passionate and intense. The 26 tracks are short and fast and mark a nice return to their less metal, more thrash days. Worth checking out. (BG)
(P.I.G.)

READING RAINBOW – "Tough Love/Over It"

Two tracks from a band I've been meaning to catch up on for a while. "Tough Love" is so great when it lets loose into the chorus! Sans the so-so breakdown verses, the track admirably flings itself down that great rambling pop path. But then again, I

can't even really be bothered with the slow SHOP ASSISTANTS songs, so maybe this would be of little consequence for other fans of reverb-popped-out tunes. The reverse side's "Over It" slows down but shines the duo's two-part harmonies, coating the canvas nicely with a '60s ASSOCIATION vibe looming in the guitar and bass lines. So, all in all it's a treat and you should grab it if you're digging the new great pop sounds of today. (Better pick it up in a shop or order through the post though, as the HoZac MySpace features a weird "vintage punk" gang rape porn mag photo that will likely induce a full body shudder.) (JS)
(HoZac)

RED MASS – LP

Quite an eclectic little album, but ultimately unsatisfying as too many determinedly eclectic albums tend to be. "Blackeye" is a relentless and catchy bit of heavy something or other and my pick to click, "True Romance" and "Together" seem like pisstakes of romantic ballads (maybe they're sincere and it's just me that's cynical and heartless), a couple of songs (the second and third best) sound like robotic neo-glam (like a good version of SIGUE SIGUE SPUTNIK, in other words), then there's songs with scattered electronic bits, distorted vocals and other assorted bits of artiness. Note to A&R department: if the whole LP were as good as "Blackeye," I'd be rushing out to buy it. (DD)
(Florida's Dying)

RED RED RED – "New Action" LP

Gotta be Midwest. Chicago? Fucked-up garage…not like '60s garage, but like BASEBALL FURIES garage…wait, more fucked up than that. Like DIE KRUEZEN mating with the MC5. Detroit? Gotta be Detroit. Bingo! Internet says ex-PIRANHAS, who were at the forefront of ugly garage rock a decade or so ago. This shit is like a tougher, hardcore CLONE DEFECTS or some shit. It's *loud*!!! Y'know those discs that you can hear the fuckin' music through the grooves when the amp is off? Lots of weird feedback and shit over updated STOOGES riffage. This shit is boss, showing that living in a tough town makes for tough sounds. (TB)
(Big Neck)

ROMERO – "Solitaire/El Sentido Morboso"

All right. This definitely is falling of the edge of punk. This is straight-up TORCHE worship from Wisconsin. Slow dredge-y stoner rock with wall-of-sound rawk, mid-tempo to slow guitars with the chorus vocals. Imagine SLEEP or the SWORD with more rock and less prog hippy moments. I can smell the bong hits wafting offa this record… The letter that came with this says that the guitarist is Jeffrey Mundt, who was in NAKED AGRESSION; this is a great departure, let me tell ya…I dunno. This probably shouldn't have been reviewed at all, but it is all right. Just add weed. Though, judging by a quick internet search, I get the feeling that this band is going to try to "make it" which is not punk at all… Pretty silver ink on black screened covers. (MB)
(Triceratrax)

RUIDOSA INMUNDICIA – "Huellas de Odio" EP

Heart First doesn't release records that often, but when they do I suggest that you get on them as quickly as possible. Hot on the heels of the 2008 Euro press of the brilliant KRIEGSHÖG EP, Heart First whips out this eight-song *rager* from RUIDOSA INMUNDICIA. From the second the needle pops, this thing just blazes—lightning fast and disgustingly furious hardcore that nods back discretely to an early-'00s all-fast attack while inserting mind-melting Japanese riffing ("Cansados" especially) amped up 1000%. The only slowdown of note comes near the end of the record's final song (it's still fast as shit, just ramped down to a revved-up circle-pit tempo), and if that bit doesn't make you want to fukkn explode then clearly hardcore just ain't your thing. A relentless attack, insanely pissed female vocals—every single element is here. My record of the month, hands down. (WN)
(Heart First)

RUINED FAMILIES – "Four Wall Freedom" LP

Hailing from Athens, Greece, RUINED FAMILIES plays modern hardcore in the crustier vein, sounding like they're influenced by everything from CURSED and CATHARSIS to MODERN LIFE IS WAR and ORCHID. Honestly, most "modern hardcore" is a fukking bore at best, especially the stuff that tries to incorporate disparate influences (as this most certainly does), but there's something about this record that actually manages to keep me engaged and interested throughout its short (less than seventeen minutes) span. I was expecting to completely pan this and then throw it in the free bin, but instead I'm keeping it and actually giving it a positive review. No one is more surprised by that than I am, let me tell you. I might even give this another spin at some point, if I ever get through my "to listen" pile. Good shit. (VX)
(World's Appreciated Kitsch / Scarecrow / Athens Noise / True to the Game / Ruined Families)

RUNNING – LP

More yowling, loose-limbed Midwestern Amphetamine Reptilian rawk. I like how dragged out the guitar is and how hollow the drums sound. This is played with more savage styling and full-speed flailing attack than most of the current puerile purveyors of this sound. It's not as compelling as certain CLOCKCLEANER records, but it's punk in a way that most attempts at this aren't. It sounds like caked-on dirt, shitty roommates passed out with a record on repeat, that dry-mouthed morning after the night before you didn't want to be at in the first place. Can't imagine reaching for this in my time of need, but it's not shitty by any stretch. I like how destroyed it sounds. Less muscular jock and more basement flange. Ugh? (LG)
(Permanent)

SAINTE CATHERINES – "Fire Works" CD

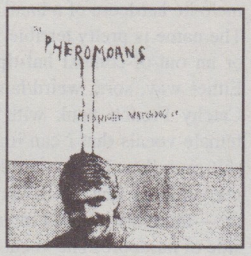
Pop quiz for all the *MRR* readers: can you think of any *good* albums that have an attractive lady or ladies on the front cover, but they aren't actually in the band? It's really hard, isn't it? Unless the photo is trying to send a social or political message, you can usually count on the album sucking. As is the case with SAINTE CATHERINES' new album. Four details of this band will tell you everything you need to know. They used to be on Fat Wreck Chords. They sound like major-label-era AGAINST ME. They employ four different publicists. And the band is sponsored by clothing and accessories companies. Garbage can. (FS)
(Anchorless)

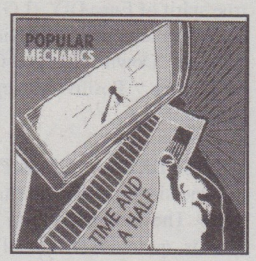
SEX PRISONER – "Judgment" EP

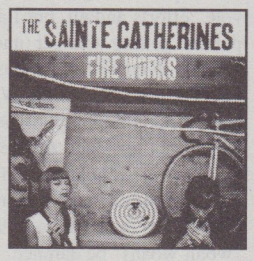
This is some good shit; twelve tracks of CROSSED-OUT-type hardcore with a little bit of a modern tough-guy beatdown style thrown in. Hey, I'm not gonna lie, I can get down with some of that shit—I still listen to MERAUDER on a weekly basis and it fits the extremely violent, pissed off lyrics really well. Kind of like the earlier shit by THINK I CARE before they ditched the INFEST influence. I bet these dudes are brutal live. (AH)
(To Live a Lie)

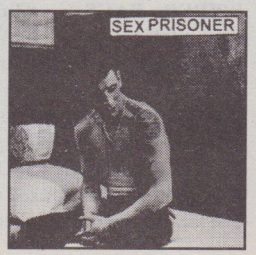
SEX ROBOTS – "Night Moves" LP

Question: How many records do you own by the QUEERS? If your answer is "all of them" then you might like this. This is extremely melodic pop-punk with every song either about love or heartbreak. Come on! There has to be more happening in St. Louis than your relationships. Arg! Maybe it's just me, but I equate albums that are only about love, to albums only about 9-11, or albums only about TV shows. Gimme something better! The musicianship is good though; nothing that really stands out, but it's all solid. Very 1995-era Lookout! Records. (FS)
(Roadhouse Tunes)









THE SHIRKS – "No Way Street" EP

I like the SHIRKS. I like that they play pared-down rock'n'roll/punk. I like that it is raw, upbeat and extremely catchy. This is as straightforward, punch-you-in-the-throat as it gets. Given the amount of energy they were able to translate onto vinyl, I imagine they'd be great to see live. (KK)
(Windian)

SIOUX – "Doppelganger" EP

This makes me think of the punk-inflected garage of the MARKED MEN mashed up with the shouty melodic hardcore of a band like DEFECT DEFECT. The name is pretty terrible... A tribute to SIOUXIE or an out-of-context hat-tip to a first nation tribe? Either way, sorta weird/lame. But the band is not! Catchy French punk with impassioned but bratty female vocals that I can imagine punks losing their shit over live. Makes me think of the Danish punk revival of a few years ago, of the OBSERVERS, too—thoughts of good interpretations of the punker side of hardcore. The vocals are awesome, the lyrics are cynical yet personal, political... And it was released by approximately 59 fuckin' labels in the true spirit of Euro DIY. (LG)
(213 / Acide Folik / Dead Kids / Matthias Demuylder / Falling Down / Middle Class Zombies Attack / Niidiystrec / Positively Negative / Sclerose / Wee Wee)

THE SLEAZE – "Crush/PCP"

One-sided single, two tracks and a whole lotta noise. The sounds of early peace punk (which I'm sure is quite unintentional) mixed up with some heroin-is-so-cool New York art-punk. Wreckless, loose and more obnoxious then ten Brace Beldens. The FALSE PROPHETS on speed or CRASS if they had a loft apartment in the Lower East Side. (SD)
(Leatherbar)

SMOKE OR FIRE – "The Speakeasy" LP

I have a sneaking suspicion that I was supposed to hate this record, but it's actually not that bad. I mean, if you've heard DILLINGER FOUR and (to a lesser extent) NOFX, you've heard the music, and if you know STRIKE ANYWHERE, you've heard similar lyrics, but that's not really that bad of a mix. A lot of people from the punx spectrum dismissed the Fat Wreck political agenda, what with their "get out the vote" efforts and all, but I appreciate the effort they put into getting younger (and possibly less informed) kids involved with, or at least thinking about politics. And I appreciate that Fat Wreck continues to release and promote poppy punk bands with a message that transcends girls and the heartbreak associated with the same. This honestly isn't really my kind of shit, but I've heard much worse pop-punk and these dudes have their hearts in the right place, excessive "woah-woahs" be damned. (AU)
(Fat Wreck)

SPIDER BAGS – "Take It Easy Tonight/ Shaunda"

Reverb-soaked, pilled-up garage with a hint of spooked-out paranoia and one acid trip too many. The freaked out moments of the CHOCOLATE WATCH BAND, given a right old roughing up with hints of ROKY ERICKISON and alien abductions. Drugged-out riffage mixed with abundant hooks and just the right amount of dirt and grit—all the required ingredients for a great record. Love it. (SD)
(Churchkey)

STANDARD TRIBESMEN – "Waiting" EP

This is an excellent single from Sacramento (now) six-piece troupe STANDARD TRIBESMEN featuring two MAYYORS Julian Elorduy IV and Chris Woodhouse. All three songs here are chaotic yet infectiously melodic stompin' rockers. There is some really well done skronk too, and while that may be a great divider among many, the saxophone here really adds to the chaos. Personally, I definitely appreciate the balls it takes to throw a sax into the mix. Underlying the gnarled, twisted sound here is a really good time carefree party that gets the recipe right. (AL)
(Mt. St. Mtn)

STEPDADS – "Déjà Vu" EP

You gotta hand it to DEREK LYN PLASTIC—he certainly is prolific. We were almost in shock when it seemed like everyone at *MRR* had a different CD of his to review a few months ago. Now he's back with a new band STEPDADS, which also includes Paul Harper of DEERHUNTER. More of what you'd expect: screechy vocals over noodley guitar rock. On this record I'd like the mix to be more balanced out—turn the vocals down and the guitar up. It seems like there may be something interesting buried down there. As it is, the high-pitched wail exuding from the speakers just gives me a headache. (CK)
(NMG)

THE STIMULATORS – "Loud Fast Rules!" CD

The STIMULATORS were a New York punk band from 1978 to 1981 that now seems only remembered as the band that featured a teenage Harley Flanagan on drums and thus foisted the CRO-MAGS on the world. There is even a sticker on this CD that states something to that effect. That is unfortunate since there is more to the band than that one punk footnote would suggest. Denise Mercedes started the STIMULATORS on her return from England where she briefly played in a band with Rat Scabies. She brought back that English sound to NY and infused it with some hometown punk. Singer Patrick Mack has a slight Dave Vanian meets Joey Ramone style of singing. The music is melodic, but fast. They even go a bit reggae and goth at times. This CD is a reissue of the ROIR cassette recorded live in 1981 in Raleigh, NC. As with all ROIR recordings the sound quality is pretty good. You get a nice sense of what the band was, although I can always do without any cover of KISS' "Rock'n'Roll All Night" (even in 1981). Listening to this makes me wish there were more studio recordings from this band beside the material on their two 7"s. Someone's got to have something, right? (CK)
(ROIR)

STRAIGHT EDGE KEGGER – "Hurt" 12"

How the fuck is this band still around? I know these people and have heard from the guitar player say on multiple occasions that the band was over. Well, Fresno's (and possibly the world's) longest-running shitcore band is still cranking out records and fuck if this one isn't actually listenable. It sounds like Meg is back on vocals and she's pissed. I was not very stoked on this band when she wasn't in it. At some point since the last time I saw them, Lonnie's guitar chops have really come along. The music is still shitty but that is because the band wants it that way instead of not having a choice. Glad to see these fucks still playing. (BL)
(Schwarzenegger Era HC)

STREET PIZZA – "Cancerous Planet" CD

Holy powerviolence Batman! This Richmond three-piece rips through twelve tracks in eighteen minutes; think CROSSED OUT and SPAZZ. There is a tiny bit of straight hardcore and thrash thrown in but they stick mostly to pure speedy powerviolence. The track "All on the Road" is classic for the genre: changing tempos, multiple vocalists, some oddness and bursts of speed. The recording sounds great, the prominent bass in particular. Give this one a listen. (MH)
(Sympathizer)

SUBTLE TURNHIPS – "Terd Album" LP

Decent arty noise-rock, kind of angular but also kind of loose and quite enjoyable. How's that for an evocative description? Then again, who needs descriptions when you can go to their website and download an earlier album in its entirety for your audio perusal. Why fuck not? (DD)
(HoZac)

SUCH GOLD – "Pedestals" CD

Melodic screaming HC that pretty much sounds exactly like STRIKE ANYWHERE. Being a STRIKE ANYWHERE fan, I guess there could be worse bands to sound just like. Decent but not original. (RL)
(6131)

SUR-RUR – LP

Hmm... This is some poppy punk from Finland with a bittersweet yet happy sound. Something is just off enough to be interesting. The vocals are what make this album unique. Finnish is a pretty harsh language and with the higher pitched raspy male vocals, these tracks are a bit better than they would be normally, but it's sort of generic for the genre. The songs are all sung in Finnish, but the liner notes have English translations. The lyrics are a great read, with words like "slimelump" and some surreal funny stuff. I have heard these chord progressions and breakdowns before, but this band would fare well at any party in any basement in the Midwest. Super danceable, but they aren't doing anything new. If you like grittier, Midwest pop punk with lots of tempo changes, check it out. Also, this record has some of the best cover artwork I have seen at *MRR* since I have been here. There is rainbow poop being shat out at a dinner table with hungry people waiting to feast. The back cover is like some cartoonish, child's version of a Hieronymus Bosch painting...terrifying and lovely at the same time. I guess I like everything about this band except the music. Damn. (MB)
(Morjekords / Roku / SUPO / Tuska and Ahdistus)

SVETLANAS – CD

So this gal-fronted punk band claims they started in 1977 in Russia, were frozen by the KGB, lost at sea and resurfaced under Italian identities. Being the cultural retard that I am, this sounds like NINA HAGEN fronting a melodic hardcore/punk band to me. The lyrics are in English as this was produced and recorded by Mass Giorgini. Apparently they've toured the US and plan on doing so again. Decent raspy socio-political punk. (RL)
(Vampata)

SWANN DANGER – "Staccato" EP

Reminiscent of SIOUXSIE SIOUX or MODERN CREATURES if they were trying to play disco jams. It's like the VANISHING if they were trying to be on MTV. Like, really bland gothy indie disco. It's just really slick and clean and completely lacking any element of danger. Bleh. (MM)
(Mess Me Up)

THE SWEET SIXTEENS – "Submarine/Loverboy"

This 7" is really gentle. Curiously, it sounds as though it were recorded all in the red. And, I'm just putting this out there, but isn't the segment of music culture that *MRR* chronicles a tad oversaturated with simple-cutesy-repetitive-fuzzed-out shit? I mean, I suppose the demand is high and these guys change some things around, making it different from others though... Keyboards and drum machines, allowing for a more flexible '80s Britpop thing to happen. But I can't help but wonder: If it's got a samba beat, is it still punk? (HD)
(Windian)

TACKLEBERRY – "Tackleberry" EP

The first side of this record is full-on, full-throated hardcore with metallic guitar leads and breakdowns. The second side sounds like it could be released on a Fat Wreck Chords compilation. None of it really holds my interest except the last song, "Quarantine," which is about not reproducing so that we can end civilization as we know it. Fuck yeah! Honestly, it's the gang vocals screaming the end chorus that I find endearing, but not enough to sell me on this band. (GH)
(Twisted Chords)

TEARS OF FRUSTRATION – "Live at CBGB" EP

Musically, I find this 7" quite appealing, and I *hate* live records. TEARS OF FRUSTRATION is an amalgam of everything I like about late '80s NYHC. Imagine a combination of all the bands on the old Rev comp, *New York Hardcore: The Way It Is*. Mostly on the SIDE BY SIDE tip; fast but plenty of room for good solid breakdowns. The B-side features competent studio versions of DRI ("Yes Ma'am") and YDL ("Blue Pride") covers. As I stated, on a musical level, this is a solid effort and worth checking out for all fans of classic-era NYHC. On the other hand, the subject matter of this EP is not for me. I just expel way too much energy on my own survival bullshit than to worry about my nation or any sense of pride about *anything*. Maybe that's unfortunate for me but I'm certainly not proud of the loser life that I lead. Maybe if I actually felt that my freedom was actually being challenged by an entity other than my own government I'd think differently. But that's just me. (JU)
(United Riot)

TEEN HYGIENE – "Show U My Delite" EP

The aural equivalent of a sloppy drunk walk home at dawn, the kind where you ponder a lot of things and talk to yourself and occasionally run into things. What I mean to say is the drums sound like they're falling apart, the vocals are slurred and vacillate between pathetic and manic, and the guitars desperately try to keep up with the ride. On top of that, it possesses a kind of charming mess aspect that can be found with other Down Under bands such as the CLEAN or UV RACE. The last song then manages to awkwardly and blatantly rip off "Not Right" by the STOOGES in a way that almost sounds like a wasted bar band jamming on "Louie Louie" for *way* too long. (MM)
(self-released)

TENEMENT – "False Teeth" EP

I always have a hard time reviewing records like this. Here we have a decent pop-punk band that plays some upbeat rock. Lots of groups do this style, but so many of them are just missing something. That extra something that makes you want to either sing along, dance, pump a fist, or do whatever it is you do to music that you love. While I wouldn't call it *bad*, there's nothing about it that makes me want to listen to it again. (BD)
(Rock Bottom)

TENSE REACTION – "Black Hole" EP

Hardcore punk from the Netherlands. The key elements here are super fast, tightly structured songs, although I'm having a difficult time drawing comparisons between them and current or past bands. I hear a bit of classic Boston hardcore like *My America*-era F.U.'S, but the differences stand out more than the similarities, because here the production is bigger, the playing infinitely tighter and the overall sound is a lot more "modern." Not bad, but I wouldn't say it's particularly memorable either. (JH)
(Bong)

TESTORS – "It's Only Death/Drac"

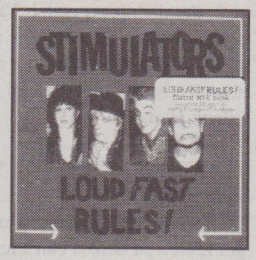
I will never cease to be amazed at the sheer amount of unreleased SONNY VINCENT/TESTORS material that has surfaced over the years. Talk about a guy doomed to obscurity. His only official release back in the day was the good but pretty tame *Tonight* 45 from 1980, long after his Lower East Side gutter-punk heyday. Back in the '90s people got a real whiff of what SONNY was capable of with Incognito's TESTORS 10", with thugged-out unreleased 1976-77 recordings. Better yet was Rave Up Records (yeah, *that* Rave Up Records) release of a full 1979 TESTORS album. I thought I'd heard the end of it when a collector scum elite tipped me off to a pretty much unknown but totally killer post-TESTORS outing known as SONNY VINCENT AND THE EXTREMES on a goddamn *flexi disc* from 1981! Then *this* popped up earlier this year, on eBay no less—an unreleased TESTORS 7" acetate from 1978! After fierce backroom negotiations, the one-known-copy acetate was secured for a ridiculous sum. It appears this release is the fruit of someone's cold hard cash outlay. It's pretty lo-fi and—dare I say?—gothic both in tempo and subject matter (if that's even possible in 1978). Actually, sound-wise this is the perfect record to be unearthed in 2010, much akin to trashed out '70s material labels like Siltbreeze and Columbus Discount have been making available of late, inspiring all the young Termbros and shitgazers alike. Hopefully this isn't the last we hear of TESTORS! Numbered out of 1000. (GB)
(Windian)

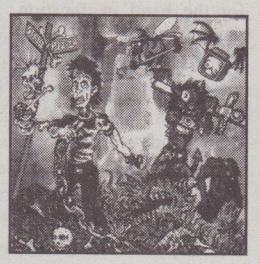
ANDERS THODE – "Emma Eckstein's Nose Job/Beat You"

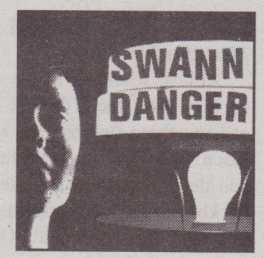
ANDERS THODE is the bass player for COLA FREAKS. That piece of information has no bearing on this record though—it's some lo-fi, shoegazing rock. The music sounds like bass guitar, keyboard and drum machine playing a very simplistic, noisy style; the vocals are almost whispered and mostly buried beneath the noise, occasionally coming to the surface. It's arty and definitely different from everything else we have here this month. I'd give an A for effort. (CK)
(Leather Bar)

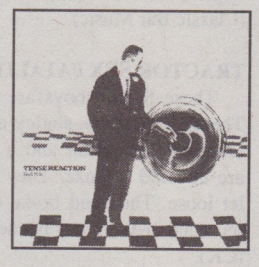
THUNDERDRIVER – "Atomic Rock" EP

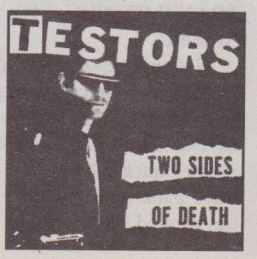
With a title like *Atomic Rock* and a band name like THUNDERDRIVER, you damn well know exactly what you're in for here—full on sonic rock'n'roll! This shit makes me wish I had long hair and was driving through the desert in a beat up Camero (er...not really). You dig KISS? How about THIN LIZZY? You better, motherfucker. How about those Swedish rock gods the SEWERGROOVES? Oh, there's so many. Smoking, whiskey drinking, cocaine and sleazy girls. Freakin' rock and stinkin' roll, baby! I'm throwin' the devil horns at you. This album makes me wanna quit hardcore and start a rock band (er...not really). (BG)
(Retrospect)











TINY KNIVES – "We're Our Own Wolves" CD

TINY KNIVES are from Portland (the West Coast one) and play a kind of trashed-out, fuzzy basement punk that is becoming synonymous with Stank House Records. The first five songs on here feel like the band is throwing themselves and their equipment down a long staircase, stumbling and fumbling to find their footing while struggling to form the chords and reach the synth at all the right places. On "Lights in the Sky," they right themselves at the bottom of the stairs and lure you in with slow, even chords before whacking you in the head again with the distortion pedal. I'm not meaning to make it sound like this is all an accident. These women know exactly what they are doing and they are doing it perfectly. Recommended! (GH)
(Stank House)

TOUCHE AMORE – "...To the Beat of a Dead Horse" CD

Several years ago, one of my friends' old bands got reviewed here. I can't remember who it was, but the reviewer called it "negative youth crew." They couldn't have come up with a worse description for the band in question. Now I'm going to use that descriptor—"negative youth crew" to describe TOUCHE AMORE. They play the same kind of melodic hardcore that was big in the later '90s and early '00s, but the difference is that while most of those bands were good, this one ain't that great. It's kind of like how fads come and go, but then someone brings it back several years down the road and no one is into it. But then what do I know? There could be a huge following for this music that I'm just not aware of. (BD)
(6131)

THE TOUCH-ME-NOTS – "Keep Talking Like That/Hard to Forget"

Almost sounding like it could've been recorded in the '70s, the TOUCH-ME-NOTS awesomely execute these two terribly charming, rootsy, hook-laden tunes. The prettiest female back-ups possible add flesh to soulful, male lead vocals and an organ backbone that holds together this already perfectly rich and totally classic, Oakland-based heartland rock sound that these guys and lady have wholly nailed. "Hard to Forget" is pretty, pretty damn near to perfection. Love the tits off this. (GG)
(Classic Bar Music)

TRACTOR SEX FATALITY – "Bloodeagle" CD

These Seattle boys are very AmRep sounding. The music is dirty, sludgy and methodical. There is feedback, distortion and a saxophone. The vocals are covered in fuzz. They slow it down and then let loose. The band broke up so these eight songs recorded in 2006 may be the last we hear from them. (CK)
(Big Neck)

TRANZMITORS – "It's Not Your Call/You Get Around"

Nothing new here, which is just what I want 'cause why would anyone mess around with absolute perfection? Well, maybe there's a very slight deviation from the norm on "It's Not Your Call," a killer track by the way, which has a slight new wave punk influence mixed in the melodies. "You Get Around" is power-pop flawlessness that ensures neither song on this single gets the status of A-side. Both are winners. I think this band will be looked back upon in future years as one laudable of their time. Amazing. (BG)
(Dirtnap)

THE TROUBLE – "Nothing Left to Say" EP

While there is a fair amount of outside appeal, I'd wager the TROUBLE means a lot more to us from the Boston area than to anyone else. Especially those of us that are now in our early 30s and spent many hours in the dank depths of The Rat either watching the TROUBLE play, or lingering around "The Pit" with its members. Listening in 2010, the whole "time and place" element rears its head into the air of nostalgia over the TROUBLE now, but—and that's a huge "but,"—these tunes still strike my gut in all the same ways. For the uninitiated, the TROUBLE played a familiar brand of punk specific to the late '90s that fused it all—street-punk/Oi, pop-punk and hardcore—and was the perfect sound for seniors in high school and those a year or two in either direction to waste our weekends on. It just had something for everyone, and hearing the two unreleased numbers on the B-side of this 7" is really exciting for me right now. It's like I'm getting a chance to add another couple minutes to my teenage years at an unexpected date later in life. This seems a fitting sentiment, since a lot of the band's lyrics, which were honestly kind of embarrassing at times, were most often about the reckless years of youth with a sort of built-in nostalgia, as if it was already over. Oof, sorry to get all *Cometbus*/per-zine on you right there. Okay, so this 7" was released to coincide with their reunion shows and collects the tune from a *Suburban Voice* comp 7", track from the Victory Records comp *East vs. West* and two unreleased joints. It's limited to 300 copies on red wax, but as of yesterday was still available on the Painkiller site. The cover makes me quite homesick. (JU)
(Painkiller)

VILE NATION – "Tight Leash" EP

Some real nasty hardcore here courtesy of Memphis' VILE NATION. Four to-the-point tracks, tight delivery, great drumming giving this manic, claustrophobic feel. *Tight Leash* is less thrashy than their two previous EPs (including the limited demo one) but no less fierce—less DRI, more CHRONIC SICK. Dirty, lo-fi recording fits perfectly. Real good. (CS)
(Way Back When / Even Worse)

VOGUE – "Pompshit" LP

This record has a dark, somewhat heavy and occasionally gloomy sound, with a lot of changeups and slower parts alternating with straight ahead 1-2-1-2 drumming. There is a refreshing lack of stock riffs on this thing, and yet the songs blend into each other and fall short of breaking through the barrier of "generic" into "above average" territory. Maybe if this was a 7", or had been recorded in a garage instead of a studio, or if the singer had at least pushed his vocals into the red when he was misrepresenting the main point of George Carlin's (RIP) "The Planet Is Fine" monologue, it'd be more memorable. I checked out two of their earlier 7"s, both of which are fairly similar but considerably better than this LP. (DG)
(Hardware)

VOLCANIC SLUT – "Blasphemaster" EP

I love the packaging on this record—total old-school death metal demo style. Of course this is a record, and not a tape... The tunes remind me of the bands that were playing thrash just as it was morphing into death metal, like POSSESSED (a lot), the DEATH demos, and SLAUGHTER. The songs are a little shorter, but this is pretty close to the genuine artifact. The B-side "Lunar Activities" is a total ripper. I do wish the vocalist sounded a little more "evil," but he gets the job done. (AH)
(Vinyl Rites)

VOMIT SQUAD – "Amon Ra Bless America" LP

This a jokey concept album featuring KING KHAN. The VOMIT SQUAD has been specially trained to stop the High Priest of the Cannibal Church. Here is the story. Six songs of generic punk played sloppily. I am sure they had tons of fun recording this and naturally all of KING KHAN's diehard fans will love this. They've got to, right? Also appearing are Choyce of RED MASS and LES SEXAREENOS, Danny Marks of SPACESHITS and LES SEXAREENOS and some guy named Rich Ritalin. (CK)
(Psychic Handshake)

THE WANTED – "La Prophetie Des Dammes" 10"

Driven by straightforward, upfront drumming and simple riffs, these twelve tracks of energetic and boisterous 1-2-1-2 throttling punk from France have reverberating, growly, DEVOID OF FAITH/ ONCLE SLAM-ish male vocals and less successfully graunchy NAUSEA-ish female vocals that shout and edge on a sing-along quality. Most tracks center on a mid tempo that's too blunt for catchiness, but are hemmed in with occasional creative guitar nods that stretch this beyond its overall simplicity. (The track "Bastard" has a weird, dumpy, avant-garde proto-Polish hardcore type sound.) Occasionally blasting to full speed, it's a solid release with lyrics entirely in French and printed in a nicely illustrated booklet. (KS)
(Mass Prod)

WELDERS – "P.E.R.V.E.R.T" – EP

An awesome document of what was apparently one of St. Louis' first punk bands, started in 1975 by a bunch of teenage girls... Everyone that sees the cover thinks it's some hipster girl band from now, but nope! True vintage appeal. They are what you *want* those girl-band Bomp! 7"s to be—you know, the ones with rad, tuff lookin' girls on the front that just sound like watered-down bubblegum whine. The WELDERS are informed by the melodies and song structures of '60s girl groups but totally invert everything to make it fit a group of bad-ass teenage girls from the rust belt! Songs about phone sex creeps and bondage, rebellion through prudery... Honestly this is such a cool, genuinely exciting record, they should have toured with the RAMONES!! (LG)
(BDR)

WHEELS ON FIRE – "Liar Liar" CD

Boilerplate garagey power-pop that's as addictive and unhealthy as high-fructose corn syrup. This is what's going on in certain circles, and these songs buzz as energetically any of the stuff that the rock'n'roll kids are spreading around like HPV.

As authentic to the style as Civil War re-enactors, WHEELS ON FIRE could stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the likes of GENTLEMAN JESSE on a good day. It's dance music for a party at Arnold's on *Happy Days*... Richie and Potsie are frugging like they've had too many milkshakes but Joanie's not buying it. (AM)
(Alien Snatch)

WHITE NIGHT – 10"

WHITE NIGHT must have passed out with their shoes on, 'cause they have "SoCal" written all over their faces. They are truly a child of their geographic region. All the songs are upbeat, ADOLESCENTS-meets-ZEROS kind of stuff, at times on the poppy side but not overly melodic. Fast and distorted party-style punk. This 10" has some pretty solid riffs and the vocals match them really well but are so buried in the mix it's hard to hear them at times. They would have really benefited from including a lyrics sheet just for that reason. Can't make out a thing. What, are you too punk for inserts? Goddamn kids! (FS)
(No Breaks)

WILD WILD GEESE – "Sorry, Earth" CD

Competently executed '90s American indie-rock. Imagine a band of PAVEMENT fans who never picked up on the FALL influences and felt more of a connection with WEEZER. This is well played and recorded, and the songs are foot-tappingly catchy and infectious (just like WEEZER, who I will not admit to liking) but the music has all the bite of an arthritic 20-year-old hound dog. The deeper you plunge into the CD there are a few upbeat tracks that approach SUPERCHUNK territory. I hadn't heard of this band before but for all I know they could be making big moves in the *Pitchfork* community right now; if not, with the right publicist, they could be—they have all the right moves. It's not my thing, but thousands could likely disagree. (AM)
(Odessa)

WRY – "Blueprint to Nero/Tempt of Will"

A Connecticut four piece. Two songs. White vinyl. Very nice screened sleeve. Side A reminds me of something, but I can't quite put my finger on it. There's certainly a touch of HOT WATER MUSIC and the guitar interplay is excellent. Side B didn't excite me as much. It's a long slow burner that never really takes off. And I like the hoarser/not-quite-screaming vocals on side A to the smoother, cleaner vocals on side B. I think this is the first release from this band, and if that is indeed the case, there is a lot of potential for future goodness. (MD)
(Forge)

YDINASEETON POHJOLA – "Tapausten Kulku" 12"

Packaged in a neat fold-out sleeve, this is a one-sided 12" of distorted, slightly sloppy '80s-ish Finnish punk, swirling in noise with shredded, wheezing vocals. YDINASEETON POHJOLA boils and simmers at a mid-speed hardcore tempo so the twelve tracks largely steamroll one after the next as opposed to detonating in complete chaos. Basic and thrashy, this might not be a strong enough entry to win over converts, but the clunky rumble, distorted ramcharge and screamed out As, Ks and umlauts hit the plate with enough energy and a hefty recording to serve as a boss fix for the diehard Finn punk freaks. The band's name translates to "Nuclear Free Zone" but the lyrics here are mostly short snippets of pointed commentary on the plight of workers, their abuse by the police and corporate shareholders, and the diminishment of their rights as the shareholders, corporate executives and wealthy take advantage of the world's financial crisis. This is happening around the world, but the most protest lyrics come from what we think of in the US as socialized Nordic countries—maybe when you've fought for gains, to see them erode is much more apparent. Solid blasting. (KS)
(Nightstick Justice)

ZEBRASSIERES – "Gooey Zoo" LP

Sounds like DEVO. Smells like GAY BEAST. Looks like the BREEDERS. Feels like TALKING HEADS if Lookout! Records was a drug and DAVID BYRNE smoked it. So my question is, what's black and white and red all over? (HD)
(Going Gaga)

ZOMBIE DOGS – LP

This is so fucking hilarious. Kathi, Krista and Rachel are playing these really badass HC songs while Tamara sings the corniest, funniest, wittiest lyrics that I could never imagine. I feel it is important to make this distinction: ZOMBIE DOGS is not a joke band, they are a band that makes jokes. So many puns... It's amazing. And then the lyrics that aren't a laugh a minute are so fucking articulate, particularly "R.M.L." and "The Once-Over." I have never heard a punk song, or maybe any kind of song, that intimates my feelings on walking down the street every day and getting harassed by people's eyes. Yeah, pretty much, holy shit. ZOMBIE DOGS kind of just blew my mind. (HD)
(Strength in Numbers)

V/A – "Knock Out in the 9th Round" CD

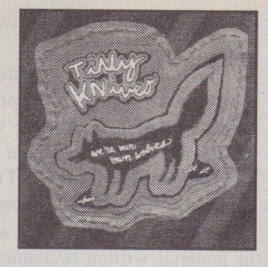
The ninth issue of Knockout Records' infamous comps (Christ, this makes me feel old, thanks Mark). Taking in all what's mean, gnarly and pissed in the current bootboy and street-punk scenes. Some big names such as HARD SKIN, BONECRUSHER and COBRA, whilst giving the tiny Docs like EVIL CONDUCT, WHISKEY DAREDEVILS and the PORTERS their day in the sun. A bonus CD to boot, (pardon the pun) and shit-heap helping of tough-guy rock. If this is your thing then you will love this. (SD)
(Knock Out)

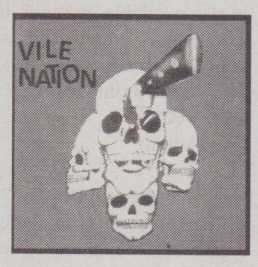
V/A – "Mass Prod" LP

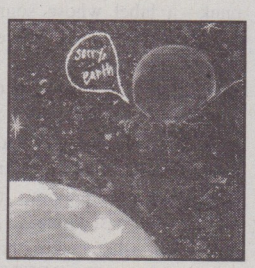
This picture-disc was put out to commemorate Mass Prod Records' 100th release, and has songs from MASS MURDERERS, RATOS DE PORÃO, SICK ON THE BUS, BONEHOUSE, DOBERMANN CULT, VARUKERS, SANSA YUMA, VIKTIMS, DISCHARGE, CRAFT, BURN AT ALL, REJECTED, GBH, POUNDAFLESH, RAW POWER and THIS SYSTEM KILLS. It appears that most but not all of the bands on this have had records released by the label, though I'm not sure if any/all of these songs are exclusive to this release (and all the songs from classic bands on here are not from their heroic periods). There's also no sort of insert that comes with this, meaning that fans of overproduced punky-punk with metal leanings who might want to see what they're listening to will have to continually stop the record to take note of band names and song titles, unless the listener has a photographic memory. (DG)
(Mass Prod)

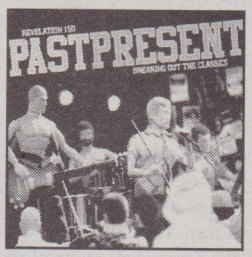
V/A – "My America: A Tribute to Quincy Punx" CD

To be honest, this is my first (certainly witting) exposure to QUINCY PUNX. As far as I can tell, they were a driving punk band with a tinge of hardcore, lots of snot, and lyrics abut being pissed off and punk and drinking and stuff. 25 Minneapolis bands plus a couple of from California do their best renditions of the best QP offerings around, I guess. As compilations go, the standard is surprisingly high. Says a lot for the QUINCY PUNX, and the vibrancy of the Minneapolis scene. I'm guessing that most of the renditions are fairly faithful to the original, save an abominable hip-hop track and the excellent '80s keyboard pop of the TRAPEZOIDS. The VIRGIN WHORES do a great job of making their offering sound like a good outtake from the DEAD KENNEDYS' second LP. This disc is a benefit for the West Memphis 3, so I've nothing but praise all 'round for it, really. With this one, everyone's a winner, apparently... (RK)
(Crustacean Records)









V/A – "Past Present: Breaking Out the Classics" CD

This is a covers album of Revelation bands doing other Revelation bands' songs. I'll admit to a fascination with these types of comps—*Land of Greed, World of Need* (EMBRACE covers) and *Violent World* (MISFITS covers) being two examples—on a guilty pleasure level. Taking *Past Present* at face value, it's an enjoyable collection of material written by bands that I know and love (GORILLA BISCUITS, BOLD, JUDGE, BURN, etc.), so there you go. In my opinion, the most successful covers here are those where the band subtly amplified some aspect of the original—for example, AMBITIONS playing up the melodic side of BOLD's "Running Like Thieves," or the MEDIAM turning CIV's "Et Tu Brute" into the raging HC song it deserves to be. There are some stinkers on here, too, but by far the worst offender is WALTER SCHREIFELS's acoustic singer/songwriter rendering of two early SICK OF IT ALL tracks—I know it's supposed to be tongue-in-cheek (if not an all-out parody), but it sucks no matter which way you listen to it. Anyway, apparently this is also available on vinyl, but the CD has a couple extra tracks. Maybe this will turn a few younger kids on to some classic bands, and in the meantime 50% of the profits will be donated to Human Rights Watch. (CS)
(Revelation)

V/A – "Puke and Destroy" EP

This record is a three-band split 7", and a significant departure from the Snuffy Smiles "business as usual." Snuffy Smiles is a Japanese record label specializing in thrashy melodic pop punk—a label whose sound was so specific that it's almost like a sub-genre of its own. So it came as a great surprise to find a brutal Japanese hardcore band on this. GROANING GROOVE is the group in question. It's good snuff, I mean good *stuff*. YOUR PEST BAND also has two tracks of SPRINGSTEEN-esque pop-punk. They're fun songs, but not quite up to par with their previous EPs, which I might add is some of the best Japanese pop-punk of the last few years. But what makes this comp Incredible (with a capital I) are the DEFECT DEFECT tracks. Two songs that may be the best they've ever written. Fast, gloomy, snotty hardcore from the Northwest US. Very crunchy guitars and catchy as hell. Fuck yeah! (FS)
(Snuffy Smiles)

V/A – "Stuffs" LP

Usually compilations fall flat because the person putting them together just throws some toss-off songs together, sticks a nice price on it and calls it a day. Then there are those comps that rise above the rest; we all know of incredible compilations that have helped shape a genre or, at the very least, have been thoughtfully curated. This one, featuring a slew of songs from lo-fi and noisy pop artists, does in fact rise above most others. Even if it's not your favorite style of music, *Stuffs* does an excellent job of showcasing some standouts in a somewhat drowning style of music. On a small label from Oslo, Norway, *Stuffs* includes fourteen mostly French and American bands signing on with mostly unreleased songs. The artist list includes CRASH NORMAL, TY SEGALL, the FEELING OF LOVE, the DICTAPHONE, and SIC ALPS to name a few, and these aren't a bunch of sloppy whatever tracks. It's good, and put together with thought and care—including the packaging, which is very nice with a gatefold sleeve. (AL)
(Compost Modern Recordings)

V/A – "Takeonemillpartysore: Four Way Split" CD

This whole disc is heavy with the "spirit of 625"—a healthy appreciation for SPAZZ and the lesser lights of the West Bay coalition. DONNER PARTY starts things off. They lack SPAZZ's crushing heaviness but have appropriated their goofy lyrics and to-the-point chaos. EYESORE is more reminiscent of the Neanderthal-ugly poundings and even uglier growlings of the early 625 catalog—EMETIC, AGENTS OF SATAN, etc. DARKMILL is the least consistent band here. They have the worst and the best song(s), mostly doing a third- or fifth-rate SPAZZ, but turn out a savage 55-second black metal/grind track, "Watch the News," which is a fucking sick rager. Yow! The disc is closed out by the disbanded TAKE ONE FOR THE TEAM, who makes the most of their dual-guitar, dual-vocal attack by being closer to plain ole blazing fast HC. They are mixing things up, even including little rocking parts, and they cover you-know-who's fine philosophical treatise, "Let's Fucking Go." Overall there's mostly quality material here, but not a lot of straight-up killer shit. With 30 songs in 26 minutes, the shitty parts don't last long and you can listen to the good ones again and again. (JM)
(Pissart)

V/A – "Test Patterns" CD

A reissue of an LP that came out in 1981, in an edition of 500, representing the St. Louis music scene. This errs on the new wave side of things, with some oozin' power-pearl poppers and even some ska, but there are a few KBD soundin' klassics to tide over the most demanding maniax... I particularly liked TRAINED ANIMAL, SWIFT KICK and the OOZKICKS, rigid guitars and dispassionate/deranged vocals! Let's mutate!!! I think these sounds demonstrate a more post-DEVO idea of punk. Do you want new wave or do you want the truth? Fuck art, let's dance! (LG)
(BDR)

V/A – "The Ties That Bind" EP

I've heard the complaint many times that "the pop-punk reviewers at *MRR* actually hate pop-punk, or at least 95% of it." I can only speak for myself, but that is totally true. Most pop-punk records are dogshit—just recycled SCREECHING WEASEL riffs redone so some moron can write a song about a girl he likes. But it's that golden 5% hidden out there that keeps me swimming through the septic tank. And then I get to find compilations like this one. Gritty, fast pop-punk, played with integrity and catchy as hell. Deeply invested in the church of Southern Region-Rock and guaranteed to make every drunk asshole in the basement dance like a fool. There are five bands that make up this 36-song comp, all of which are from either Tennessee or Georgia. GIANT BAGS OF WEED and ROCK PAPER STUPID had the real stand-out tracks, but QUE' MART? and WRISTER are totally solid. PETER STUBB, the crazy/genius BRIAN WILSON type, did musical interludes between the tracks. This is really fucking good and comes with a huge zine-style booklet and a tape. Super recommended. (FS)
(No Breaks)

V/A – "T.O. Hardcore '83" LP

I hold here a vinyl pressing of this seminal Toronto, Ontario (*no way*) hardcore (*huh?*) comp cassette from 1983 (*mind blown*). There were always exceptions, but in the years when punk and hardcore were fresh and developing, every locale had a regional sound. Now, I'm not saying all bands from the same places sounded the same but they *were* all knit from the same fabric. Where I'm going with that is that all the bands on this compilation all embody what *I* consider to be the "Canadian sound." That means meat'n'taterz punk that's played faster and with more hooks than the thrashing hardcore of the time. For reference, see DOA and TOXIC REASONS (kinda-Canadians). The highlights of this comp for me are the snotty tunes of YOUTH YOUTH YOUTH, the sounds-like-nothing-else-ness of YOUNG LIONS and DIRECT ACTION's classic punkers. Cool to see this reish, which I might add is on the same label that put out the original cassette. (JU)
(NRK, no info)

V/A – "Too Much Music...Too Many Bands: 20 Years of Boss Tuneage" 4xCD

Sometimes you get too close to something to really appreciate what you have. I've known Aston for nearly 20 years. In fact, he was probably on his second release back when we were fresh-faced nippers with smaller waistlines and more hair. Since then he has pretty much been the lynchpin to melodic UK punk, releasing record after record because they needed releasing. Because he believed in them. Not for fame, money or glory...but because he knew they *needed* releasing. After his hiatus in the mid '90s, he returned doing quality reissues of *my* history...bands that shaped me like RIPCORD, HERESY, JOYCE MCKINNEY EXPERIENCE, STUPIDS, the ABS, etc. His recent releases of current bands like VIOLENT ARREST, SOUTHPORT, GERIATRIC UNIT and the like show that over the past two decades he has remained a lifeline for the UK scene. I haven't always agreed with his taste (his fascination with the NILS and BIG DRILL CAR, for example), and I haven't liked every record, but there are always releases that I love and return to year after year. So much of what he does is quality. This box set is much more than just a retrospective. Disc one is culled from releases of the last 20 years with greats such as ANNALISE, SOUTHPORT, SHITTY LIMITS, etc. Disc two is the reissues—a who's who of late-'80s punk and hardcore. Disc three is the covers, which is Boss Tuneage bands covering all sorts of stuff (a lot of pretty obscure choices), and disc four is the rarities, which are pretty much exclusive to this release. There's like 120 tracks on this thing and it's a tremendous listen from front to back. Not only is this a great historical release, it's also a look into today and the future for the label. This label is exactly the reason I'm still here, still believe in this shit. It also reminds how much good fuckin' music comes from that mean little island. Bravo mate, hat tip to you. You should be proud. We are. (TB)
(Boss Tuneage)

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Chocolate Covered: 559 Paris St San Francisco, CA 94112, www.chocolatecoveredrecords.com

Churchkey: PO Box 862 Durham, NC 27702, www.churchkeyrecords.com

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Compost Modern Art: compost-modern-art.blogspot.com

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Hardware: www.hardware-records.com

Hawthorne Street: hawthornestreetrecords.com

Heart First: Landsberger Str. 146, 80339 München GERMANY, www.heartfirst.net

HG Fact: www.interq.or.jp/japan/hgfact/

Hockey Champ: hockeychamprecords.blogspot.com

Hozac: www.HoZacRecords.com

Iconoclast: iconoclastrecords@gmail.com

I Feel Good: www.ifeelgoodrecords.com

Inimical: www.inimical.com

Iron Lung: PO Box 95521, Seattle, WA 98145

Jackknife: www.myspace.com/thejacknives

Knock Out: www.knock-out.de

Koolarrow: www.koolarrow.com

La Familia: PO Box 105824, 28058 Bremen, GERMANY, www.lafamiliareleases.com

Leather Bar: www.myspace.com/leatherbarrecords

Longshot: 1301-17th st, San Francisco, CA 94107, www.longshotmusic.com

Mess Me Up: 11 Rue Du Manoir De Sevigne, 35000 Rennes, FRANCE, www.messmeuprecords.com

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Mass Prod: www.massprod.com

MCR Company: 157 Kamiagu Maizuru, Kyoto, 624-0913, JAPAN, www.dance.ne.jp/~mcr/

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Minor Bird: minorbirdrecords@gmail.com

Modern City: 270 Rue de Crequi, 69007 Lyon, FRANCE, www.moderncityrecords.com

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No Action: PO Box 944, Blackwood, South Australia, 5051, AUSTRALIA

No Breaks: 184 Rogers Street NE Suite #301 Atlanta GA 30317, www.nobreaksrecords.com

Odessa: PO Box 1301, Carrboro, NC 27510, www.odessarecords.com

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Pancake Productions: pancakeproductions.com

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Paska: dissipedcrust@yahoo.fr

Passing Bells: Läntinen Pitkäkatu 19 as. 18, 20100 Turku, FINLAND

Permanent: www.permanentrecordschicago.com

P.I.G: PO Box 13536, Des Moines, WA 98198

Pissart: Khabir, No. 2 Jalan Putra Bahagia 8, 1E, Subang Jaya, Selangor DE, MALAYSIA, www.pissartrecords.com

Private Press: available via nosympathizer.com

Psychic Handshake: myspace.com/psychichandshake.com

Raakanaama: www.raakanaama.fi

Ratchet Blade: POB 26966, Los Angeles, CA 90026

Recess: www.recessrecords.com

Red Scare: www.redscare.net

Reel Time: 32 Engel Pl., Rochester, NY 14620

Resisting Arrest: www.resistingarrestaz.com

Retrospect: www.retrospectrecords.com

Revelation: PO Box 5232, Huntington Beach, CA 92615, www.revelationrecords.com

Roadhouse Tunes: www.roadhousetunes.com

Rock Bottom: 25510 E. Comfort Drive, Forest Lake, MN 55025-8765, myspace.com/rockbottomwrex

ROIR: PO Box 150-460 Van Brunt Station, Brooklyn, NY 11215, www.roir-usa.com

Roku: Kemintie 1488, 97130 Hirvas, FINLAND, moguli@rokurecords.com

Rowdy Farrago: www.destructors.co.uk

Ruined Families: ruinedfamilies.blogspot.com

Rusty Knuckles: www.shoprustyknuckles.com

Scarecrow: www.scarecrow.gr

Schwarzenegger Era HC: myspace.com/straightedgekegger

Scumusick: med-user.net/~kurwaaparata/disco.htm

Seventh Dagger: www.seventhdagger.com

Shogun: 3 Rue Du Lavoir, 51140 Bouvancourt, FRANCE, www.shogunrecordings.com

Shove: www.myspace.com/shoverecords

Six Weeks: www.sixweeks.com

Sjakk Matt Plater: Postboks 49 Valerenga 0626 Oslo, NORWAY

Slovenly: POB 204, Reno, NV 89504, slovenly.com

Snuffy Smile: 12-A Kamikousaicho Shichiku Kita-Ku Kyoto 603-8117, JAPAN

So Called: www.myspace.com/socalledrecordsdiy

Solar Funeral: www.solar-funeral.org

Spaghetti Cassetti: myspace.com/spaghetticassetti

Speed Wax: punkhounds.bigcartel.com

Stank House: www.stankhouserecords.com

Stomp: www.stomprecords.com

Strength In Numbers: www.strengthin123.com

Stumble: www.stumblerecords.com

Suburban White Trash: myspace.com/punkrockjoe

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Sweet Rot: PO Box 78025 Vancouver, BC V5N 5W1 CANADA

Sympathizer: www.myspace.com/sxpxrvafast

Teen Hygeine: teenhygiene.bandcamp.com

Thought Crime: Muskauer Str. 19, 10997 Berlin, GERMANY

Tic Tac Totally: PO Box 558383, Chicago, IL. 60655-8383, www.tictactotally.com

To Live a Lie: www.tolivealie.com

Too Circle: 221-3 Hi-home Kodaira 510, Nakamachi Kodaira-City #187-0042 Tokyo, JAPAN, www05.upp.so-net.ne.jp/toocircle/

Totalpunk: c/o Alexander Jakovlev, P.O. Box 44, St. Petersburg 192 171 RUSSIA, totalpunkrecords@gmail.com

Triceratrax: www.triceratrax.com

True to the Game: truetothegame08@hotmail.com

Tuska and Ahdistus: elisanet.fi/tuskajaahdistus

Twisted Chords: Reutweg 1A, 76327 Pfintzal, GERMANY www.twisted-chords.de

Undislessed: BP 515, 33001, Bourdeaux Cedex, FRANCE, undislessed.ifrance.com

United Riot: www.unitedriotrecords.com

Vampata: www.myspace.com/svetlanas77

Vinyl Rites: www.vinylrites.net

Vitamin Bomb: myspace.com/vitaminbombrecords

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DEMOS

Send demos and CD-Rs to: MRR attn: Demos, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please provide a postpaid price and a mailing address with your demo! Reviews by Brad Lambert, Dan Goetz, Marissa Magic, Robert Collins and xYosefx

THE ALRIGHT ALREADIES – Instantly addictive '60s girl group worshipping dance inducing and smile creating punk from Chicago. Pull out your *Girls In The Garage* comps and start studying up on your reverb guitar. These women have all been in other noteworthy bands, but the pedigree is irrelevant because this band outshines them all. Excellent. (Robert) (4-song CD-R, no lyrics, myspace.com/thealrightalreadies)

THE ANGRIES – Frenetic and anxious female fronted punk...they start to drag during the more basic punk songs and I could do without the cowpunk tinge on some of the tracks, but tunes like "Rat" are instant winners. The vocals are more than enough to hold my interest though — super powerful and not at all typical. (Robert) (11-song CD-R, lyrics included, myspace.com/theangriesrock)

BALLASTIK – They call their demo *Total Distort*, and that's exactly what they do: blown out chaos attack drawing heavily from Japanese crusters. More crust than noise, but still plenty of distort. (Robert) (4-song CD-R, no lyrics, myspace.com/ballistikpunx)

BLAST AND THE DETERGENTS – Garage-y and minimalist punk rock from Florida with just two guitars and a drummer. The songs are jangly and not melodic at all, with more of a noise feel than a rock sound. The songs are mid tempo to slower with almost intelligible high-pitched lyrics and lots of loud, sloppy guitar. This sounds like some friends in the basement who got together to crank out some noise rather than trolling musicians wanted ads in the hopes of starting a band to be popular and get girls. It is raw and unpolished and feels real. (Brad) (12-song CD-R, lyrics included, myspace.com/blast123)

BOURBON SCUM – The cover of this thing has three baby-faced party animals bro-ing down, one of them degrading an URBAN WASTE shirt in the process, and they have a song called "Porn Machine." I guess the bands' name is truth in advertising, but I'd imagine that the more tactful affecters of the "city rocker" vibe wouldn't admit to a reliance on porn. If you're still interested, the music is admittedly decent DEAD BOYS inspired bar band stuff. (Dan) (5-song CD-R, no lyrics included, no contact info)

BUFFALO BANGERS – After the dreary/dreamy and excellent opening track, BUFFALO BANGERS dance between quirky indie/post-punk and dark '80s tunes well suited for a reflective montage scene in a teen movie. Reverb heavy, meandering guitars and insistent female vocals are the two constants as they swerve between subgenres — fukkn' great stuff, but they are from Wisconsin so that should come as no surprise. (Robert) (7-song CD-R, no lyrics, myspace.com/thebuffalobangers)

THE BURNING LIGHT – The first song sounds like a '70s shitgaze version of EVERYTHING BUT THE GIRL, and the last song sounds like a remix of a song that could've been on the *Cruel Intentions* soundtrack, leaving 60% of this demo being reviewable. Those three songs are written in the same way as many generic, overproduced melodic hardcore songs that you'd find on CD-only releases, but they're played though a fuzzy, dreamy haze that's such a contrast that they listen like covers. The vocals are erratic, and the whole thing does visually conjure up a burning light, perhaps that of the early morning after spending an evening in darkness. (Dan) (5-song CD-R, no lyrics included, theburninglight.tumblr.com)

DANTIEN – Catchy melodic punk from Oakland...I was lost in my mind searching for a comparison so I called in an expert. She says it kinda sounds like SMOKING POPES, and I think that sounds pretty reasonable. (Robert) (8-song CD-R, lyrics included, 1800 Campbell St., Oakland CA 94607)

DEFENESTRATOR – Midwest metalcrust massacre. Four songs from kids weaned on statesmen DESPITE and WORDS THAT BURN. Heavy guitars, crushing attack, you know the drill and they do it well. (Robert) (4-song CD-R, no lyrics, 316 6th Ave., Eau Claire, WI 54703)

A DISCO FOR FERNS – Even casual perusers of the *MRR* demo reviews should be familiar with these Lindale, Texas trolls. They call this a "Best Of..." collection, but it sounds like the same songs that have been on the releases that have graced our magazine for the last few months — lo-fi borderline inept small town punk that has a distinct, indefinable (and sometimes unfindable) charm. Even with our fine stable of reviewers, it is impossible to keep up with their onslaught of releases...I guess that's just what you do in Lindale with the other three punks in town. (Robert) (20-song CD-R, no lyrics, 11777 Brazos Way, Lindale, TX 75771)

DUFLAN DUFLAN / LE PRINCE HARRY – Oppressive synth-punk from LE PRINCE HARRY, not far removed from San Francisco's PHANTOM LIMBS, but with keyboards worthy of SUICIDE and a torturous pace reminiscent of AmRep noise mongers. DUFLAN DUFLAN sound almost cartoonish in their dance inducing female fronted electro attack...I can't really believe that I like it. But I do. Hopelessly catchy rhythms from a maniac drummer, and blips and beeps shrieking in unison with a wailing saxophone and pixie-ish vocals — I'm sweaty just listening. This was a split 12", but the label only saw fit to submit a CD-R, so here it is languishing in the demo section; their loss, your gain. (Robert) (11-song CD-R, no lyrics, www.rockerillrecords.com)

DUNGEON HONEY – This is terrible singer/songwriter crap that some dude with floppy scene hair makes. I can see why you don't have a band Jeremy James. He included a couple business cards in case I wanted to contact his management and sign him to my label or something. They include a picture of him with said floppy scene hair and his phone number, which is 615.202.0585. Apparently he doesn't mind getting obscene phone calls about how much his music sucks at all hours of the night because I can't imagine why he would send this shit to *MRR* otherwise. Fuck off and die you pretentious, obvious, unoriginal asshole. (Brad) (10-song CD-R, no lyrics, myspace.com/dungeon honey, myspace.com/sexinthedesert)

ESKIZOFRENICOS – Portugal's self-proclaimed "Sewer Rockers" are back with a second demo. Gruff vocals in line with a lot of rough mid tempo European punk, but the music here walks a line between endearing, basic delivery and quirky song structures. As much as it hurts to admit it, the winner here is the song "Qero Lamber-te A Cona," which translates to "I Wanna Lick Your Pussy" for the Portuguese-deficient. (Robert) (7-song CD-R, no lyrics, myspace.com/eskizofrenicosband)

FLAT BLACK ANIMA – OK, so I'm starting to get what this Fleshwave label is all about. This is another dark electro-pop project made on some not-so-great equipment. This is the last time I'm picking up an envelope in the *MRR* demo box with a bunch of CDs in it. The instrumentation is better on this record than the other ones I just listened to and I probably like it the most although it is still kind of what I'd expect to listen to at a goth makeout party. These jams are a bit more structured and are occasionally pretty while still being moody. The third song even has a little "oh oh uhohoh" part at the end. Not bad, but I want to get you a Roland MC-505 for Christmas. (Brad) (4-song CD-R, no lyrics, mikefleshwave@gmail.com, 32031 Williamsburg, St. Clair Shores, MI 48082)

GETTING EVEN – Hey, new bands: if you don't sound like INFEST or something similar, please don't have a boldface double-underlined logo. It's just fucking confusing. Case in point: I threw this on expecting fast, pummeling, hardcore. Well, it's hardcore, but it's not fast or pummeling, more mid-tempo and rocking. It's not bad, but now I'm left having unfulfilled expectations. Alas. This is good, not great, but good. One of the songs has a strong BORN AGAINST/mid-period BLACK FLAG vibe to it, which I dig. These guys apparently feature members of the REAL ENEMY (who I liked quite a bit), HOLDING ON, BODIES LAY BROKEN and KILL SADIE. I would check out more material by them, hopefully without an INFEST-like logo. (Yosef) (4-song cassette, no lyrics included, Rock Bottom Records, 25510 East Comfort Dr., Forest Lake, MN 55025)

GYPSY – Jangling power-pop-punk that could come from Chattanooga or Memphis just as easily as from San Francisco. Nice and distorted drums mesh well with a clean guitar and vocals that would be well suited for music far more professional than GYPSY, but that are thankfully spending their time with desert punks instead. This was a one-day project with MARKED MEN and SNAG-A-LANG members.

(Robert) (4-song CD-R, no lyrics, myspace.com/dirtcultrecords)

IMMACULATE PALACE / TERMINAL GIRLS – Apparently this is a split of two laptop projects covering each other's songs that came in the same envelope as the above disc. I like IMMACULATE PALACE a lot more as it is more of a spooky electro-pop while TERMINAL GIRLS is muddled with two many sounds competing. The programming just isn't there or maybe it's a limitation of the software used. The beats are not very complex and the bands don't vary much from the original version in their covers, which was pretty much what I thought doing covers was all about. (Brad) (4-song CD-R, no lyrics, mikefleshwave@gmail.com, 32031 Williamsburg, St. Clair Shores, MI 48082)

JENKEM – Well executed poop and porn obsessed grind from Philadelphia. (18-song CD-R, no lyrics, myspace.com/jenkem666)

KNIFEY SPOONY – In spite of existing right in my backyard, I avoided this band because their name suggested that they play ironic cutesy nonsense, but am kicking myself now because this goddamn rules. They play fringe, party/adventure music (in a good way) that fuses a number of influences, but I hear everything from out-there garage to bratty punk to NEIL YOUNG to the earliest NIRVANA stuff to the same '70s rock records that BLACK FLAG took cues from later on. Despite the many sounds, this band knows how to write good songs regardless. Five originals and a JOHN FOGERTY cover. (Dan) (6-song cassette, no lyrics included, 4102 Adeline St., Emeryville, CA 94608)

LOUIS LINGG & THE BOMBS – Smart snotty garage-y punk from France. There is a wild and all encompassing party contained on this CD-R, all you have to do is press play. From JAY REATARD to SHAM 69 to EPOXIES, catchy punks from all corners of the earth seem to have converged in central Europe and doused themselves in anarchist theory before making the dance mania punk disc you've been dreaming of. (Robert) (27-song CD-R, no lyrics, myspace.com/louislinggandthebombs)

NUKKEHAMMER – Another already sold-out release for me to review, huzzah. Entitled *The Future of Siberia*, this is the second demo for these Ohio crusties, who feature members of VILE GASH, DISMAL, and BLACK DOVE. NUKKEHAMMER (great band name) play raw, stripped down, apocalyptic crust/hardcore with a distinct MOTORHEAD vibe on some tracks (especially "Skeletal Hand of Reagan"). I can see why this is already sold out. Maybe if enough people hit the labels up it'll get re-pressed. Definitely worth seeking out. (Yosef) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, Solar Funeral c/o Dennis Berendts, P.O. Box 2192, Heath, Ohio 43056-0192, solar-funeral.org; Life-Rot, charred_remains@yahoo.com, liferot.blogspot.com)

ORCHARD OF THE LIVING – Plodding southern tinged crust. They are reaching for NEUROSIS-esque moments that seem to be just beyond their grasp but the majority of this demo is heavy, ugly, and packed with just enough groove to get the stoner crust crowd off their asses. Think BUZZOVEN without all the drugs. (Robert) (7-song CD-R, lyrics included, $5 ppd from: Song Order Records, 33 East 8th St., Greenville, SC 29611, myspace.com/songorderrecords)

RAT ATTACK – The problem with our demo dispersal system at *MRR* is that in the "grab what you like bin," sometimes music gets separated from its packaging. Thus, I have no clue where RAT ATTACK is from of how to tell you to find them. This is a shame, because these four songs are great, infectious and brilliantly written punk. I am reminded of the SOVIETTES and the four songs on the first SAHARA HOTNIGHTS record that make the whole thing worth holding onto. Flirty and feisty female vocals are the first hook, and then you are drawn in with synths and dangerously professional songwriting. The last song sounds like the CARS...I happen to like the CARS. *RAT ATTACK: please drop a line and let me know where I can find more, your band name is kinda tough to search on the magic future computer machine*. (Robert) (4-song CD-R, no lyrics, no contact information)

RED SEX ARMY – A 2008 recording that is somehow just making into these pages, I thought we ran a tight ship around here? Quirky mid tempo Olympia sounding numbers that periodically veer into '80s goth territory (particularly on "Shed No Tear"). Nice and gloomy female vox suit the tone set by the music. Good stuff for a chilled out evening. (Robert) (6-song CD-R, lyrics included, $4ppd from: Song Order Records, 33 East 8th St., Greenville, SC 29611, myspace.com/songorderrecords)

RISE – Polish vegan straight edge metal-core from the AT THE GATES meets HATEBREED school. They are really, really good at it — the melody is never overpowering, and the whole recording is heavy as shit. If you like the genre, then this is near perfect. (Robert) (6-song CD-R, no lyrics, myspace.com/risecore)

ROSENKOPF – Weird stuff here. The A-side has three instrumental tracks, and the B-side has two remixes. This is experimental music played by punks; the guitar veers into post punk and psych territory, which can be pretty cool, but the industrial thump of the drum machine really wrecks it for me. This isn't bad for a first attempt, and maybe I'm just not the right audience for this sort of thing, but it leaves me wanting. (Yosef) (5-song cassette, no lyrics [all instrumental], $3.50 ppd from Rosenrelease, 609 18th St., Brooklyn, NY 11218; Toxic State Records, 192 Jefferson St. Apt 1R, Brooklyn, NY 11206)

THE SCRAMS – Raucous garage rockers from New Mexico — these songs are drenched with sun baked drunken sweat. A party that lasts 30 minutes and almost as many beers, for fans of OBLIVIANS, REIGNING SOUND and all forms of organ saturated high energy rock 'n' roll. (Robert) (11-song CD-R, no lyrics, c/o 1204 Lead Ave. SW, Albuquerque, NM 97102, www.thescrams.com)

SEX OBJEX – I'm pretty sure this is a laptop band. The first song sounded pretty good so I didn't toss it, kind of a garage tune with epic metal overtones and vocals that sound in the vein of THE HIVES trying to do IGGY POP. The rest of the songs are not as good and kind of all over the place with a lot of influences that makes it sound like it's not the same project. Most of the songs go for a kind of haunting but poppy sound with a lot of fuzz on the guitars. Individual songs sound good but the disc overall is disjointed as hell and I would like this much more if it was a band. (Brad) (12-song, CD-R, no lyrics, mikefleshwave@gmail.com, 32031 Williamsburg, St. Clair Shores, MI 48082)

A SHADOW OF A DOUBT – This band describe themselves as "chaotic" and "emotive", and that sums it up pretty well. Musically this takes a lot from screamo in the vein of FUNERAL DINER or AMPERE as well as chaotic '90s hardcore like COALESCE, mixing in some jazzier parts for good measure. If that sounds like it might be up your alley, check it out. (Yosef) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, Derrick Spotts, 21 Crescent St., West Hartford, CT 06119, tickledmeat@gmail.com, livetodaylikeyoucametomorrow.blogspot.com)

SUN GOD – Early '90s indie hooks, HÜSKER DÜ guitar leads, vocal melodiousness and a crushing heavy delivery leaves me not sure what to think about Cleveland's SUN GOD. Heavy on the guitars, but then the vocals lean towards the syrupy sweet side of pretty boy punk...but somehow it all works and then a screaming lead whallops you from out of nowhere. Three new songs and eight from older singles in a killer screened sleeve. (Robert) (11-song cassette, no lyrics, bigpurplerecords.com)

THOUSANDAIRES – Late '90s melodic knee-swaying punk a la HOT WATER MUSIC or ALKALINE TRIO. Done well, but done before. You know that knee-swaying dance, right? (Robert) (3-song CD-R, lyrics included, $2 ppd from: www.mandiblerecords.com)

UV RACE – "Homo" – UV RACE are always a good time that land somewhere between the shambolicness of SWELL MAPS and the bumbling pop of TELEVISION PERSONALITIES but don't really sound like either but very definitely Australian. I saw them play at the leather gay bar and there were like seven goofy kids on stage all chaotically falling together and apart. It struck me as almost like one them was like "Going to America!" and all the punks in ear shot were just like "me too!" Anyways, I enjoyed this cassette tape, and the last couple tracks where the main singer is a girl rather than the monotone dude that usually belts them out were probably my favorites, one them almost coming off as a bored THE MO-DETTES. I've also heard a lot of comparisons to ELECTRIC EELS and EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING swirl around, but whatever—it's a good record, more of the same from these kids. (Marissa) (Hidiotic Records, no info)

V/A – THE COMPLETE HOMOCRIME SINGLES CLUB – A beautifully packaged release, this 3xCDr set is from folks associated with HOMOCRIME, a queer London club night that ran in the mid '00s. Music runs from the noisy/post-punk end of the spectrum to arty weirdness and back to more basic and easily digestible pop. Highlights for me include LINUS, the MINCE PIES, the FIRMTURDS, JEAN GENET, SLEEPING STATES, and American dirty pop punkers OPERATION: CLIFF CLAVIN and the MAX LEVIBE ENSEMBLE are included as well for your pleasure. Great screened booklet with band (and HOMOCRIME) information, and the whole fukkn' thing is also available as a free download. (Robert) (84-song 3x CD-R, no lyrics, www.homocrime.org)

V/A – 8UP PUNK – The kids associated with 8UP crank out an impressive amount of music and I feel like I review shit from their crew every month (sometimes several at a time). This three-band comp starts with the UNPATRIOTICS, fast and slightly metallic catchy punk. Good stuff with a touch of *Oi!* for good measure. A DISCO FOR FERNS seem to be at the epicenter of this label/scene, and they are up next with weird, guitarless freakouts and the tamest GG cover I've ever heard. The DEAD PAWNS bring up the rear; gruff punk and stupid lyrics ("whoa-oh you cunt!") interspersed with mellow folkish tunes. (Robert) (24-song CD-R, no lyrics, FREE from: PO Box 465, Pilot Knob, MO 63663)

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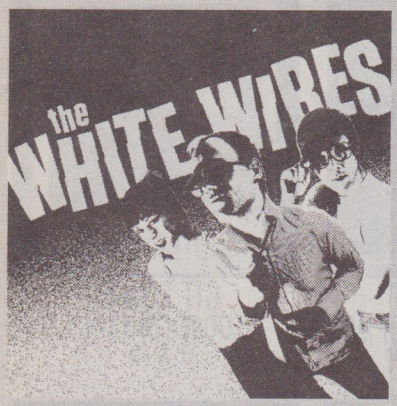

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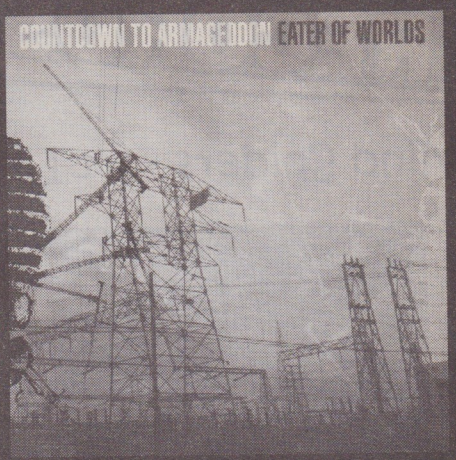

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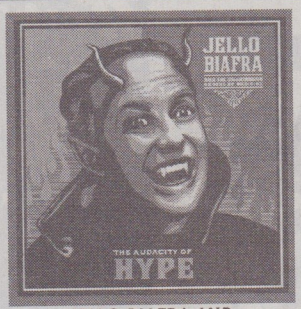

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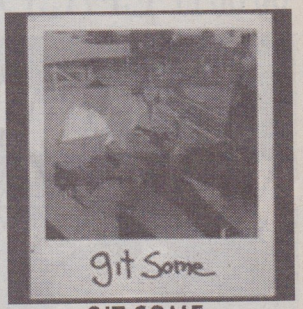

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THE WIDOWER
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Director Marcus Rogers makes the "Weekend At Bernie's" of goth rom-coms.
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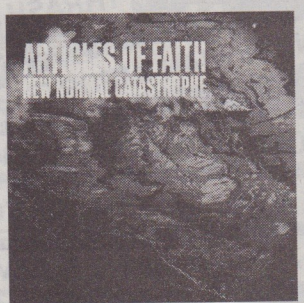

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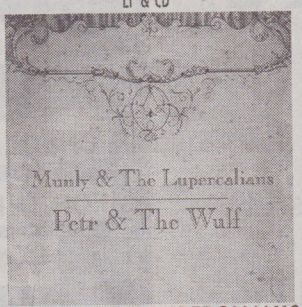

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ZINES

Send zines for review to: MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please include the following info on a separate piece of paper with your zine: postpaid price, international price, do you take trades?, size, copied or printed?, number of pages, language, mailing address, website address, email address.

Reviews by:
(MB) Mariam Bastani **(EC) E.Conner**
(JB) Julia Booze **(DG) Dan Goetz** **(BG) Bob Goldie** **(MM) Marissa Magic** **(FS) Fred Schrunk**
(TB) Tim Brooks **(DJ) Danielle Gresham** **(JH) Jenn Hartman** **(JM) Jeff Mason** **(DS) Dionne Stevens**
(LG) Layla Gibbon **(BL) Brad Lambert** **(CR) Casey Ress** **(VX) XYosefX**

ACK ACK ACK #2 / $5 ppd or trade
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 40 pgs
I've never really understood the appeal of photozines. Sure, *My Rules* was cool, but most of the time a photozine seems to be an excuse for someone to stand in front of you at a gig and feel like they're doing something important. I can appreciate photography, but I really do prefer hardcorepunk zines that also feature interviews, thoughts, ideas... you know, words and writing and all that shit. As far as photozines go, though, *Ack Ack Ack* is better than most, and the reason for that is Matt Average is actually a pretty skilled photographer—"photographer" as distinguished from "guy with a camera who thinks he's a photographer." Not every shot in here is a keeper, but most of them are excellent, and they all show a remarkable grasp of composition. Every image is tightly cropped and perfectly timed, capturing the intensity of the moment. Maybe I wouldn't be so constantly annoyed by the gaggle of scenester shitheads crowding the stage at damn near every show if more of them produced photos like these. If you're a fan of punk photography, and if you want to see some cool shots of Assfort, Born Dead Icons, Hellshock, Cut the Shit, Wrangler Brutes, and some other bands, then you could do worse things with five bucks than ending it Matt's way. (VX)

ISO3200 Press / PO Box 25605 / Los Angeles, CA 90025
iso3200press@yahoo.com/
iso3200press.blogspot.com

BE EMBARRASSED BY YOUR PAST / $?
3 x 5 – handwritten – 52 pgs
The name says it all. This craft project really has no place in this magazine's review section. (DS)

BLUE FLORAL GUSSET / trade only
5.75 x 4.25 – copied – 14 pgs
First things first: *Blue Floral Gusset* reads like a dream, which totally makes sense when you find out that the narrator works in a library. Identifying as a transvestite ("non-fetishistic, male-identifying, cis-gendered, for those who are curious"), John addresses the usual matters that come up for non-gender-conforming folks—confused healthcare workers, defensive exchanges with strangers, personal safety. But he does it with skill and humor. From the particular challenges that of wearing short skirts to *Dr. Who* marathons with roommates, it's a warts-and-all look at a gender identity that doesn't get much discussion. As a meditation on awkwardness and the joys of owning your own skin, *Blue Floral Gusset* is funny, smart, nerdy, and honest. (JH)
Spurzine / PO Box 41 / Flinder Lane / Vic 8009 / Australia
spurzine@gmail.com

BROKEN PENCIL #49/ $6.95
10.5 x 8 – printed – 72 pgs
With essays on the mainstreaming of indie culture, hella reviews, and writer profiles, Issue 49 of BROKEN PENCIL is a rad resource for DIY print media. There's not much that's going to shake the boat, but its contents will please anyone who regularly finds themselves in the "Books and Zines" category on Etsy. The best part is a six-page excerpt from *Three Girls*, by Hyein Lee: at a sleepover, young Hyein sees a face peeking at her from behind the attic door. She finds out that her neighbors are keeping an orphan in their home—like a character from a horror movie, Na Rae is shut in the attic, malnourished and covered with scabs and bruises. The neighbor's son says, arms crossed, "We own her. I can do anything to her, you know." Hyein's mother takes her in for several weeks, while the neighbors are on vacation, feeding and caring for the neglected girl; but after the neighbors return, Hyein never sees the girl again. The final panel finds Hyein wondering, "What would happen to her when the neighbour's boy grows up?" Hyein Lee's piece is understated and chilling, and stands out in comparison to the bulk of the other selections, which are mostly pleasant, nonthreatening, and, every once in a while, awesome. (JH)
PO Box 203 / Station P / Toronto, Ontario M5S 2SY / Canada
www.brokenpencil.com

CHACHI FRIJOLES #1 / $3
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 23 pgs
A tour zine that is short and amusing enough to get you through a couple of shits, but neither long nor substantial enough to take precedence over any non-bathroom reading. It's deceptively short, with relatively little text per page, over a boring newsprint background, but the general gist is that he roadied for his friends' band, smoked a lot of weed, ate food, watched his friend puke in a swimming pool while they were both on hallucinogens, and doesn't really talk about any of it in an interesting or funny way. There's also an atrocious piece in which he flirts with creationist thought while denouncing religious ideas of afterlife, claiming "we can create justice ON EARTH" [emphasis in original], and he ends the zine with a gnarly story about a kid in his high school losing parts of his fingers in a wood plainer. (DG)
1402 Richmond Ave #208 / Houston, TX 77006

COMMUNICATING VESSELS #22, Fall-Winter 2010-2011 / donation (US dollars or stamps)
7 x 9 – printed – 52 pgs
Our literary and radical-minded friends from the Rose City devote most of this issue to a few longer articles. The work and life of Franklin Rosemont, a Chicago are writer and agitator, are extensively detailed. Another piece delves into the Arab Surrealist Movement, which as you might guess quickly became an exile group. I don't give a fuck for surrealism, but it warms my heart to hear of students revolting against the growing conservatism of the education milieu, which is how these folks got going. The greatest thing this zine has to offer is the beautiful, uber-diy printing they use to make each issue inspiring to someone like me, whose attention span is far too poor to appreciate much of the literature these folks are praisin'. In fact, I accuse their attack on the crudity of what passes for modern art, literature, etc. of being too

similar to the views of the shriveled, crippled shithead Alexander Pope in his poem *The Dunciad* (which sucks). Please send at least $3 if you can, as this is a huge, ad-free, labor-intensive publication. (JM)
PO Box 83408 / Portland, OR 97283

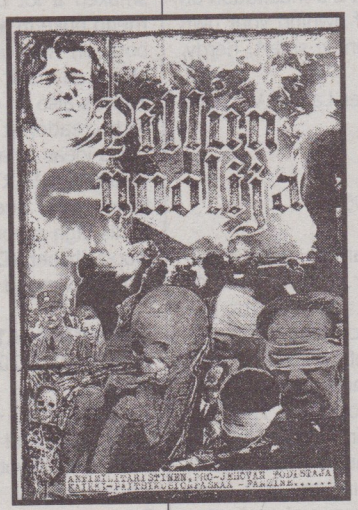
DECAY #2 / trade
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 12 pgs
This New Jersey zine is coming from a genuine place, and I like that. Too bad more than half the content is comprised of an excerpt from a piece in another zine. I bet this zine will improve with every issue. (DS)
D. Marcial / 51 Birch St / Bloomfield, NJ 07003
obnoxium@gmail.com

DOUBLE, DOUBLE, TOIL AND TROUBLE / donation (US dollars or stamps)
5 x 9 – printed – 32 pgs
This thin pamphlet is a reprint of a science fiction story by Holley Cantine from the early 1960s. Our humble and decent narrator discovers an arcane method of duplicating any item, and this power falls into the wrong hands. The story moves along at a reasonable pace, meaning I didn't grow weary right away, as happens with most fiction I try. This reprint is courtesy of the folks at *Communicating Vessels*, and as an addendum they include a brief biography of the author, including a photo of him standing over his own printing press. Please include $2 when asking for a copy, if you can. They'll send you a free one if you can't. (JM)
PO Box 83408 / Portland, OR 97283

EARTH FIRST! News #1 / Free (pdf. internet only) - $25 combo. subscription with Earth First! Journal
8.5 x 11 – printed – 8 pgs.
This is the first issue of the most recent brainchild from the Earth First! collective. It is aptly titled "Lughnasadh"—the Gaelic holiday celebrating the harvest season, or the celebration of the earth's bounty as a whole. The articles are considerably shorter than it's parent publication with more attention clearly focused on direct actions happening across the globe. My only qualm with the newsletter is that the eco-prisoner support list is not as well rounded perhaps due to lack of space (or to streamline the layout). Nonetheless this is a great tool for activists and gives you a concise update on radical protests, gatherings, and actions. (DJ)
Earth First! Journal / PO Box 3023 / Tucson AZ 85702
www.newswire.earthfirstjournal.org

EAST VILLAGE INKY #45 / $3
4.25 x 5.5 – copied – 40 pgs
This is the 45th installment of a zine written by the mother of two kids about their adventures in Brooklyn. There is a story about digging through the garbage to find a lost retainer, a lesson about Vikings, the Terry Gilliam movie *Brazil*, directions on how to build a Viking ship model with household items, applying some DIY ethic to kids school food and more. While I support moms and parents, especially punk ones, and understand the direction where Halliday is trying to go, but this zine is pretty dry. If you are an upper middle class mom living in Brooklyn trying to reconcile your punk roots with being a parent in an ideologically isolated environment, well I guess you will relate. Which, I am fairly sure that most *MRR* readers will not... I appreciate the efforts of punk parents trying to bring their experience to the table and even reach out and build some camaraderie with other punk parents, because having a kid/kids turns your life upside down, but this zine is just not a fun read. Parents might want to check it out to at least know the experience of others, but I doubt it. But...I do hope that Halliday can inject some of her environmentalism into the school system her kids are involved in. (MB)
Ayun Halliday / PO Box 22754 / Brooklyn, NY 11202
www.AyunHalliday.com

EVEN IN CASE I AM BURNING PLEASE DON'T PISS ON ME / $?
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 24 pgs
This is completely insane. Each page is filled totally with writing, hardly any images at all, just a million thoughts contained somehow on Xeroxed papers sloppily folded together. There is no contact info at all, I *think* the zine was written by a dude called Kuti? Not sure! It reads like it was written up all night style, on some sort of amphetamine, every paranoid thought, memory and idea typed out manically. This is about girls, hardcore, alienation, fear, rage, boredom, some of it is pretty disturbing but it's strangely compelling. It makes me think of listening to the Homostupids, one of my favorite bands. It also reminds me of Harmony Korine's writing. Probably one of the best personal zines I have read in recent memory... Some of it is really hard to read as a woman and as a feminist, really creepy, he creates a total world, his own thoughts and experiences on the page in a way that is both horrifying and fascinating but total. This isn't like hobo punk writing about hoppin' trains across the USA cliché perzine; this is a window into a desperate and desolate mind. It's hilarious too. He writes about music in a really cool way, and likes a wide range of it. It's an explosion of thoughts, on everything from watching girls dance at shows and how that informs his idea of punk through to listening to Wipers on the bus. I can't describe the content without it seeming dull and ordinary perzine style, it totally isn't, it's so manic. This is insane to read. Wish I could tell you how to get one. No info! Mysterious guy, hardcore? (LG)



FREAKOUT / 3,50 Euro
9x 12 – printed – 12 pgs
In the letters section just last month there was a response to a request for a Spanish *MRR*. The answer was of course "diy baby..." but then France came along and did it. *Freakout* combines *Zipgun* with *MRR* perfectly in general taste and layout. Best suited to readers with a grasp of the French language though. (DS)
Freakout 1 / 11 Rue Chalopin / 69007 Lyon / France
freakoutzine@gmail.com

GENEVA13 #13/ $2 ppd
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 59 pgs.
The format of the zine caught me by surprise as I was not expecting such a clean and precise layout. My first glance through the pages made me weary to expect long boring diatribes from crazed locavores. Refusing to remain stubbornly judgmental I sat myself down and started from the beginning. I was immediately hooked. By reading this zine I feel like I have traveled to the small town of Geneva and have been welcomed by their budding alternative community. The first few pages kick off the running theme of passion for DIY publishing, and various forms of print (local and non-local). This anniversary issue truly celebrates the inspiration that makes G13's DIY aesthetic possible which is their community. Rather than creating barriers and judging others (which I wrongly did), they encourage people to ask questions and share knowledge with one another through printed matter. Ultimately they hope others will do the same, no matter their location. (DJ)
Geneva13 Press / PO Box 13 / Geneva, NY 14456 / mail@geneva13.org

GHOSTS OF READY REFERENCE #4 / $2 (or trade)
5.5 x 4.25 – copied – 54 pgs
Any poor soul who has spent time behind a counter at a retail store or a customer service desk or anything of the like will surely appreciate this fine little publication dealing with life as a librarian. And this means being a librarian in a major city, where crazies of all types and smells and from miles around just love to congregate. The premise of the zine is quite simple—it's a collection, assumingly based on memory, of bizarre conversations and interactions this librarian has been forced to endure on any given day in the line of duty. I've seen the absolutely insane and hilariously weird individuals that hang around the downtown branch of the San Francisco Library so I could only image what it must be like to work there and deal with them. It's pointless to go into specifics as far as the conversations go, but imagine reference desk questions that go nowhere, insults and abuse for absurd reasons, and most of all, astounding displays of ignorance. Being "crazy" doesn't just mean those who are certifiably and medically insane, but also just the random batshit crazy types like those who get wrapped up in conspiracy theories. *Ghosts of Ready Reference* gives you a feeling that the editor is sharing his world with you, and it's quite a fun little read. (BG)
R. John Xerxes / 10 Inca Lane #2 / SF, CA 94115
www.lovebunnypress.com

MODERN BROPAR #6
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 32 pgs
This is like reading a West Philly scene report. A bunch of show reviews, a story about digging out an ice hockey pitch during a particularly brutal winter, and a ton of stuff about car clubs. This guy and his friends seem to be about making shit happen, bands, shows, kicks, you name it. This was a pretty brief read, and definitely not my area of interest, but it makes West Philly seem like a fun place, if super bro-dawg esque. (LG)
www.myspace.com/BROPAR

ONE WAY TICKET TO CUBESVILLE #9/ 50p (whatever that is)
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 32 pgs
This UK anarcho-punk effort has been strolling through the park and feeding pigeons for 23 years. I alternate between imagining an English butler and Sid Vicious reading this out loud to me. I admit this is due to my deep cultural ignorance, however, it's also much funnier to read things this way. There are some stellar and hilarious interviews in here. The DOOM interview is probably one of the better things I've ever read in my life. There is the gossipy dish on the new found CRASS drama-rama. Included is a cut out puppet show so that you can bicker with Steve and Penny taped to your middle fingers. Reviews and vegan recipes as well. Obviously the output of a real pro. (EC)
cubesville@hotmail.com
Cubesville / PO Box 4388 / Manchester M61 OFL / United Kingdom

PILLUN NUOLIJA #1 / $?
6.5 x 9 – copied – 44 pgs
This zine really, really makes me wish I could read Finnish or Swedish or whatever language this is. This is probably the best looking zine I've seen all year, a pinnacle of the cut-and-paste aesthetic. Every single page is a collage of photos and drawings with clearly readable typed text overlaid, mixing images of war, death, and devastation with cartoons, historical illustrations, and religious symbolism. This is really, really good design, reminiscent of Sakevi's work on GISM's albums and Gee Vaucher's for *International Anthem*. It's a damn shame that I can't read a word of this, but it looks like there are some interviews with bands (and possibly with some non-band folks), reviews of some classic '80s horror flicks, and some other writings as well. Definitely a fukking cool zine, all the more so if you can actually read the damn thing. (VX)
Balle Runkvist / Knullgatan 6 d 12 / 20100 Malmo / Skandinavia

SHOTGUN SEAMSTRESS #5 **/ $3**
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 44 pgs
This is an amazing zine by and for black punks, queers, feminists, artists and musicians put together by Osa Atoe who if you haven't noticed is a columnist for this very publication. I've been a fan since the first issue and it's mega energizing to watch it get bigger and gain more contributors with each issue. This issue features interviews with Kicktease, DJ Soul Sister and more along with comics, reviews of records and zines and some totally ripper writings. My favorite was probably a piece called "DIY or DIE!" that perfectly articulated what I've been trying to say about punk "it is a cultural movement based on resistance. Resistance to what? Well, to the status quo and all it entails, the backbone of the status quo in our society being capitalism." The entirety of the zine is challenging and inspiring at the same time. A fucking must have. (MM)
shotgunseamstress@gmail.com

SHOTGUN SEAMSTRESS #5 / $3
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 44 pgs
This lady really puts together some great interviews. The Shotgun Seamstress's gaze is fixed mainly on queer women of color doing interesting music-related things in the "dirty south." Osa writes a column that you may be familiar with already by the same title. That said, her subjects tend to have less to do with hardcore punk than the average reader might be seeking; so, if that is your preference then you may want to steer clear of this one. (DS)
shotgunseamstress@gmail.com

SLINGSHOT #104.1/ Free in person and to prisoners $1 for shipping for others
11 x 17 – printed – 15 pgs
Slingshot has perfected the use of color and manual layout for newsprint. *The New York Times* sucks. I don't wanna hear about Obama's new grey pubic hair. I wanna know about relevant shit happening in my community. New info shops/radical spaces are opening up all the time across the country. There is a need for the representation of women/queers/and people of color in punk. A look at the network and infrastructure of a national movement of Free Schools. A call for an effort of sustainable urban toilets (dealing with our shit!). Methods to deal with government oppression and the emotional fallout of being targeted by the state. A tender and honest personal account of abortion. The disabled folks of California are pissed and they want The Terminator to reinstate their funding. And so much more! A beautiful two color poster that deserves a place on every punk house wall. I don't care if it is put out by a communist sex cult! I LOVE *SLINGSHOT*!! (EC)
3124 Shattuck Ave. / Berkeley, CA. 94608

SLOWING THE WAY #1 / $6.25
8.5 x 11 – copied – 58 pgs
At first I thought I was looking at a DIY brochure for raising awareness about Huntington's Disease. Seems this zine is a journal of a bike ride that took an entire month, crossed 1300 miles and raised money/awareness for the sake of their friend who was diagnosed with it. Brief entries describe the pitfalls (literally) and joys of taking on such a huge physically taxing project. It sounds like it was fun and really hard. It's sort of...hard to read. For people who are considering a serious bike trip like this, or people interested in the cause. (JB)
Kathleen Vlodek / 363 Warren St. / Rossville, GA 30741

SMILE HON, YOU'RE IN BALTIMORE #13 / $3
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – printed
This is basically a literary journal in fanzine form that focuses on Baltimore. As one would expect from a city from which masterpieces such as *Pink Flamingos* once emerged, this is full of the bizarre, twisted, horrifying and hilarious... Makes for entertaining if somewhat disturbing bathroom reading, dissolute stories from the barroom, crime reports, famous residents and a father grieving for a child he never knew. (LG)
wpt@eightstonepress.com

SO NAILS #5 / (trade or stamps)
7.75 x 6.25 – printed – 24 pgs
This Hawaiian zine has all the precise ingredients that make independent publishing so special and worth supporting in this day and age of apathy and excessive reliance on the internet. The graphic layout is done well and the interviews are interesting and warrant reading even if you don't know or particularly dig the band. Most of all, it has passion that one can feel when reading the heartfelt introductory rant dealing with the editor's frustration with the mindlessness and laziness of his scene. Man, anyone who's been around the block a few times has heard this before, but you can still relate to the dissatisfaction of realizing that even the punk scene is mostly full of the same idiots you tried to escape years ago. It's sort of like that Minor Threat song "It Follows." But instead of giving in, this guy puts out *So Nails* and makes his contribution and effort. As always, my favorite part of any zine is opinions and columns, and this one has a great rant on those who are just too damn positive all the time. Then there is an excellent interview with the legendary Eric Wood of M.I.T.B./ Bastard Noise. And as mentioned earlier, the interviews are short and substantial. Other interviews include the *Crass Records* oddball jazz punks The Cravats, and the wacky Nihilist Spasm Band. There are a slew of reviews, including a page dedicated to obscure Hawaiian bands, a few random write-ups (on the underground Spanish horror flick Arrebato, an obit on DJ Screw, and descriptions of local record stores) and a few good photos tossed in as well. Definitely a zine to check out. (BG)
Corby / 914 Makahiki Way #4 / Honolulu, HI 96826 / www.sonails.blogspot.com / brainsandhands@yahoo.com

TIE BREAKER #1 /$3
7.5 x 4.5 – copied – 76pgs
In his inaugural issue, E. Chris has chosen to explore the topic of terrorism and more specifically how the label of terrorism has been used to silent dissent, imprison activists, infiltrate organizations that threaten capitalism hegemony and generally clamp down on resistance. Specifically he addresses issued related to the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act and the disparate treatment afforded to those who use violence against property compared to those—such as abortion provider murderer—who use violence to further a social agenda. Also included is an interview with supporters of imprisoned activists, Hugh and Tiga. The entire zine is readable, smart and thoughtfully produced with a clean and complimentary design aesthetic that incorporates illustrations and comics. If future issues maintain this level of attention and consistency, *Tiebreaker* can be a compelling read for years to come. (CR)
PO Box 171 / Bloomington, IN 47402
echrislynch@gmail.com

TINTED WINDOWS #3,4 &5 / Available for S.A.S.E, trade, or equal postage price
3.5 x 4 – copied – 8 pgs each
The personal enjoyment derived from each of these three zines was wildly different. All together they are kind of a melding of absurdum and poetry. Issue #3 was just a collage of pictures with sparsely overlaid dialog. It didn't have much of a point and didn't feel interesting in an artist way. Issue #4 had the same layout design but most of the zine was about discovering an "amateur pasting affliction" and a story about walking a dog. This zine had context but still doesn't give to the reader to walk away with. Although issue #5 was fantastic. It's mainly a collection of prison poems by a fellow named Jason Cerrutti and a few pictures. The poems are powerful and well written. Real intense stuff. For the price, this is worth checking out. (FS)
D. Bolleri / 1033 Rosewood Ave / San Carlos CA 94070

UGLY CUTIE, FLUFFER / $1 each
2.5 x 4 – copied – 16 pgs
Weird art zines with scratchy pseudo sexual drawings of young girls having their limbs pulled apart, dressed as nurses and with paper bags on their heads. Weird co-joined little girls, girls cutting up teddy bears. Kaiti who draws these is fucked up. I dig 'em, even if I don't totally get it. (TB)
c/o Billy / 318C Frost Road / Sandia Park, NM 87047

WHENEVER I SEE A BEARDED HOBO ON THE STREET, I'LL THINK OF YOU AND SMILE #1 / $?
8.5 x 11 – printed – 32 pgs
This is a great zine that documents the author's three month trip to the US from Brisbane, which I believe is his first time to the land of the golden arches, as he puts it. He zigzags between a bunch of different bigger cities, documenting the debauchery and excitement that ensues, and makes a lot of observations on US culture to which most citizens are probably totally desensitized, but that he finds fascinating in good and bad ways. His main contacts in the US were people from Microcosm, and so he ends up spending a while in Bloomington, writing about the town in a way that makes me want to hang out there and go quarry jumping with the locals, and reaffirms my belief that punks in smaller towns often know how to have infinitely more fun than their big city counterparts. This zine is well deserving of the professional printing that it received, and there are an abundance lot of great, high-quality pictures that he took everywhere he went, though I wished he'd included captions, especially since some of them aren't on the same page as the corresponding text. And if you've ever wondered what the inside of the *MRR* house looks like, he took a picture of that too when he interviewed Cissie and Layla. (DG)
beardedhobo.com

WHEN LANGUAGE RUNS DRY #2, #3 / $4
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 52 pgs each
We have two issues of this very specialized zine "for people with chronic illness pain and their allies" and they are both fucking awesome. Both zines are largely comprised of personal stories, some in comic form about living with chronic illness pain, all of which are extremely personal and interesting. The zine also seems to be completely comprised of works by woman-identified persons. A majority of the illnesses described in these personal narratives are not visible and when reading about the social and personal aspects connected to these invisible illnesses, it's pretty damn mind blowing. I say that because of what people can endure in way of physical, emotional, mental pain and, inevitably, the ignorance and insensitivity that people are capable of. This zine brings up some very complicated theory and situations in which many of us are not familiar with. The comic in issue #3 by Anna Hamilton, "Invisibly Ill" is extremely insightful in its examination of feminist theory, embodiment, stereotyping and more, with equal parts of a personal and academic approach. The end of issue #2 has a section that is text from a handout created for an event planned around the release of the first issue of this zine and, I would say, is an invaluable guide to the beginner ally. This is a great zine with an important lesson, whether you are a person who is living with chronic illness pain and trying to find your way, or a friend/family member who has no idea how to be supportive, read this zine for some skills or for a sense that while each case is very different, you are not alone. It's a smart, sometimes funny, sometimes heartbreaking, but inspirational read. Above all, I learned a lot from this zine, especially to remember not to judge on appearance. If you do not have chronic illness pain or have never been exposed to it, reading this can only make you a better person by scratching the surface of learning how to be sensitive and supportive, or at least keep your foot outta your fucking mouth and not be such an insensitive asshole. Highly Recommended. (MB)
nevertwice@yahoo.com

WHY NOT FEST
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 48 pgs
I don't imagine too many big name hardcore acts make it through North Dakota on tour, and the folks there don't give a fuck. They don't need you. They do their own bands and seem to have created a vibrant local scene. The area is apparently loaded with punks and bands and they gathered together to create a fest, and maybe your band will go there next year, adding to the local flavor a bit. Why Not Fest zine is actually a program for this three day endeavor that happened last summer. The document before me is proof that this happened, and that proves relevant enough for me to applaud the effort at scene reporting however, many would disagree. (DS)
Pangea House / 109 Central Ave W / Minot, ND 58703

WOMANIMALISTIC #1 / $6 or trade
9 x 13 folded – copied – 32 pgs (with pull out poster)
I really love Caroline Paquita's work from her hand painted signs and posters to the numerous artworks she's done for various projects (including *MRR*). The cover of the zine is one of her scantily clad animal grrrls riding the back of an afroed wolf pony. Amazing? Yes. She has a true knack for blending her drawing style into a sick mashup of gritty punk comics sweetly tinged with folk art. The stories in this issue include an illustrated passage from "The Ballad of the Sad Cafe", a va-jazzling craigslist personal, and beekeeping. I am particularly fond of the last few pages devoted to homeopathic DIY. Caroline offers simple suggestions and tips on how to delve into the roots of true healthcare. This part is also illustrated with a great comic about demystifying all those crazy punk "cures" that rid your ailments. (DJ)
Caroline Paquita / 442-D Lorimer St. #230 / Brooklyn, NY 11206
www.carolinepaquita.com

THE ZINE KIDS GO TO COPYTOWN / $2
5x8 – copied – 28 pgs
This guy is prolific...I just reviewed a different zine by him last month. This time he comes at us with a choose your own adventure story about two kids trying to make a zine for the Chicago Zinefest. It's a cute idea, well written and fun if that's your steez. I found it all a little cutsie to be honest. Shit I'm 38 years old, I'm sure this is rad if you're 17. Don't get me wrong, I still think Billy has a good literary voice and I'm always stoked to get something written by him...I just think I'm not the demographic for this particular outing! (TB)
Billy / 318C Frost Road / Sandia Park, NM 87047

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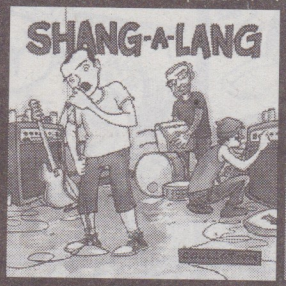

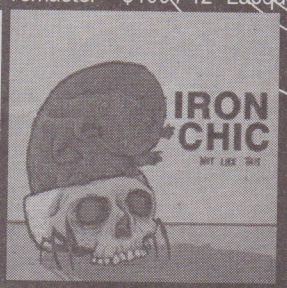

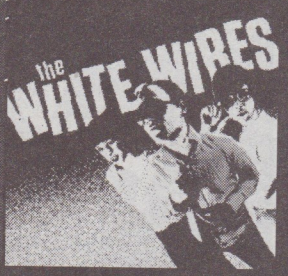

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